ROUTLEDGE'S XXTH CENTURY LADIES' RECITER

Edited by
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TWENTIETH-CENTURY LADIES' RECITER

Twentieth-Century Ladies' Reciter

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PREFACE

THIS present volume is an attempt to bring together a considerable number of selections suitable for Lady Reciters. I hope it may be the means of occasionally preventing the voicing by ladies, of verses in which the supposed speaker is one of the sterner sex.

How often have audiences listened, without much chance of conviction, to such dramatic recitations as "Lasca," "Fra Giacomo," or "Prince," as rendered by the Lady Reciter; who, I venture to think, would have been wiser to leave such pieces well alone.

In compiling this book I have divided it into two parts: the *first* more or less serious in character, and the *second* made up of humorous selections, amongst which will be found numerous pieces well adapted for "encores"; or for occasions when lengthy recitations would be undesirable.

Space prevents my including here many poems equally good for this purpose; but those wishing to extend their field of selection will, I think, find much to suit their taste in other books of this series and also in the two extensive volumes which I have entitled *The Reciter's Treasury of Verse* and *The Reciter's Treasury of Prose and Drama.*

ERNEST PERTWEE

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A WALTZ-QUADRILLE

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

THE band was playing a waltz-quadrille,
I felt as light as a wind-blown feather,
As we floated away, at the caller's will,
Through the intricate, mazy dance together:
Like mimic armies our lines were meeting,
Slowly advancing, and then retreating,
  All decked in their bright array;
And back and forth to the music's rhyme
We moved together, and all the time
  I knew you were going away.

The fold of your strong arm sent a thrill
From heart to brain as we gently glided
Like leaves on the wave of that waltz-quadrille;
Parted, met, and again divided—
You drifting one way, and I another,
Then suddenly turning and facing each other,
  Then off in the blithe chassé,
Then airily back to our places swaying,
While every beat of the music seemed saying
  That you were going away.

I said to my heart, "Let us take our fill
Of mirth, and music, and love, and laughter;
For it all must end with this waltz-quadrille,
And life will be never the same life after:

O, that the caller might go on calling,
O, that the music might go on falling
  Like a shower of silver spray,
While we whirled on to the vast Forever,
Where no hearts break, and no ties sever,
  And no one goes away."

A clamor, a crash, and the band was still,
'Twas the end of the dream, and the end of the
    measure:
The last low notes of that waltz-quadrille
Seemed like a dirge o'er the death of Pleasure.
You said good-night, and the spell was over—
Too warm for a friend, and too cold for a lover—
  There was nothing else to say;
But the lights looked dim, and the dancers weary,
And the music was sad, and the hall was dreary,
  After you went away.

A FABLE

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

Some cawing Crows, a hooting Owl,
A Hawk, a Canary, an old Marsh-Fowl,
  One day all met together,
To hold a caucus and settle the fate
Of a certain bird (without a mate),
  A bird of another feather.

"My friends," said the Owl, with a look most wise
The Eagle is soaring too near the skies,
  In a way that is quite improper;

Yet the world is praising her, so I'm told,
And I think her actions have grown so bold
  That some of us ought to stop her."

"I have heard it said," quoth Hawk, with a sigh,
"That young lambs died at the glance of her eye,
  And I wholly scorn and despise her.
This, and more, I am told they say—
And I think that the only proper way
  Is never to recognize her."

"I am quite convinced," said Crow, with a caw,
"That the Eagle minds no moral law,
  She's a most unruly creature."
"She's an ugly thing," piped Canary Bird;
"Some call her handsome—it's so absurd—
  She hasn't a decent feature."

Then the old Marsh Hen went hopping about,
She said she was sure—*she* hadn't a doubt—
  Of the truth of each bird's story:
And she thought it a duty to stop her flight.
To pull her down from her lofty height,
  And take the gilt from her glory.

But, lo! from a peak on the mountain grand
That looks out over the smiling land
  And over the mighty ocean,
The Eagle is spreading her splendid wings—
She rises, rises, and upward swings,
  With a slow, majestic motion.

Up in the blue of God's own skies,
With a cry of rapture, away she flies,
  Close to the Great Eternal:

She sweeps the world with her piercing sight—
Her soul is filled with the infinite
And the joy of things supernal.

Thus rise forever the chosen of God,
The genius-crowned or the power-shod,
Over the dust-world sailing;
And back, like splinters blown by the winds,
Must fall the missiles of silly minds,
Useless and unavailing.

ROSALIND

ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON

BURY my summer love in a summer grave,
Under the roses, close to the murmuring wave,
Sigh but one sigh as he slips from sight, no more;
Then your foot to the stretcher, your hand to the oar.

It was his will to come when the woods were green,
Smiling, delaying he stepped the elms between,
I sat musing, the boat swung loose in the tide,
Then as I wondered, he stept with a smile to my side.

Green were the streamers that swayed in the water cool,
Mute were the grave-eyed fish that poised in the pool,
Deep, how deep, were the heavens of sapphire blue.
He was tender: I cared not if he were true.

While we floated, the dumb boat jarred on the bank,
Chilly the breeze crept up, and the red sun sank,
That was the end I knew, when he stept to the side;—
Yet, ah yet, was it he or I that died?

[*From* Lyrics (*John Lane, London*). *By Special Permission of the Author.*]

THE SHIP O' THE FIEND

OLD BALLAD

"O WHERE hae ye been, my lang-lost lover,
This lang seven years and mair?"
"O I'm come again to seek your love
And the vows that ye did swear."

"Now haud your tongue o' my love and vows,
For they can breed but strife;
Now haud your tongue o' my former vows,
For I am anither man's wife."

He turned him right and round about,
And the tear blinded his e'e:
"I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
If it had not been for thee.

"I might hae had a noble lady,
Far beyond the sea;
I might hae had a noble lady,
Were it no for the love o' thee."

"If ye might hae had a noble lady,
Yoursel' ye hae to blame;
Ye might hae taken the noble lady,
For ye kenned that I was nane."

"O fause are the vows o' womankind,
But fair is their fause bodie;
I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
Were it no for the love o' thee!

"For I despised the pearls and rings,
And the fair lady also;
And I am come back to my ain true love,
But with me she'll not go."

"My husband he is a carpenter,
And earns gude bread wi' his hand;
And I hae borne him a little son;
Wi' you I winna gang."

"Ye may leave your husband to himsel';
And your little son also;
And sail wi' me across the sea:
Sae fair the wind doth blow."

"O what hae you to keep me wi',
If I wi' you should go—
If I should forsake my good husband,
My little young son also?"

"See ye not yon seven pretty ships—
The eighth brought me to land—
With merchandise and mariners,
And music on every hand?

"There's mantles warm to wrap my love,
O' the silk and soft velvét,
And rich attires to deck her head,
And costly shoon for her feet."

She turned her round upon the shore,
Her love's ships to behold,
Their mainyards and their topmasts high
Were covered o'er wi' gold.

And she has gone to her little young son,
Kissed him baith cheek and chin:
"O fare ye weel, my little son!
For I'll never see you again."

She has drawn the slippers on her feet,
Well wrought wi' threads o' gold,

And he's wrapt her round wi' the soft velvét
  To haud her frae the cold.

"O how do you like the ship?" he said
  "Or how do you like the sea?
And how do you like the bold mariners
  That wait upon thee and me?"

"O weel I like the ship," she said,
  "And weel I like the sea;
But where are a' your mariners?
  I see nane but thee and me."

She hadna sailed a league frae land,
  A league but barely three,
Till she minded on her dear husband,
  And her little young son tee.

"O gin I were on shore again,
  On shore where I wad be.
Nae living man should flatter me
  To sail upon the sea!"

"O haud your tongue o' weeping," says he,
  "Let a' your mourning be;
I'll show you how the lilies grow
  On the banks o' Italie."

"O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
  That the sun shines sweetly on?"
"O yon are the hills o' Heaven," he said,
  Where you will never win."

"O whatna mountain is yon," she said,
  "Sae dreary wi' frost and snow?"
"O yon is the mountain o' Hell," he cried,
  "Where you and I maun go!"

And aye when she turned her round about,
  Aye taller he seemed for to be;
Until that the tops o' that gallant ship
  Nae taller were than he.

He strack the mainmast wi' his hand,
  The foremast wi' his knee;
The gallant ship was broken in twain,
  And sank into the sea.

THE CONFESSIONAL

[SPAIN]

BY ROBERT BROWNING

I.

It is a lie—their Priests, their Pope,
Their Saints, their . . . all they fear or hope
Are lies, and lies—there! thro' my door
And ceiling, there! and walls and floor,
There, lies, they lie, shall still be hurled,
Till spite of them I reach the world!

II.

You think Priests just and holy men!
Before they put me in this den,
I was a human creature too,
With flesh and blood like one of you,
A girl that laughed in beauty's pride
Like lilies in your world outside,

III.

I had a lover—shame avaunt!
This poor wrenched body, grim and gaunt,
Was kissed all over till it burned,
By lips the truest, love e'er turned
His heart's own tint: one night they kissed
My soul out in a burning mist.

IV.

So, next day when the accustomed train
Of things grew round my sense again,
"That is a sin," I said—and slow
With downcast eyes to church I go,
And pass to the confession chair,
And tell the old mild father there.

V.

But when I falter Beltran's name,
"Ha?" quoth the father; "much I blame
"The sin; yet wherefore idly grieve?
"Despair not,—strenuously retrieve!
"Nay, I will turn this love of thine
"To lawful love, almost divine.

VI.

"For he is young, and led astray,
"This Beltran, and he schemes, men say,
"To change the laws of church and state;
"So, thine shall be an angel's fate,
"Who, ere the thunder breaks, should roll
"Its cloud away and save his soul.

VII.

"For, when he lies upon thy breast,
"Thou mayst demand and be possessed
"Of all his plans, and next day steal
"To me, and all those plans reveal,
"That I and every priest, to purge
"His soul, may fast and use the scourge."

VIII.

That father's beard was long and white,
With love and truth his brow seemed bright;
I went back, all on fire with joy,
And, that same evening, bade the boy
Tell me, as lovers should, heart-free,
Something to prove his love of me.

IX.

He told me what he would not tell
For hope of Heaven or fear of Hell;
And I lay listening in such pride,
And, soon as he had left my side,
Tripped to the church by morning-light
To save his soul in his despite.

X.

I told the father all his schemes,
Who were his comrades, what their dreams;
"And now make haste," I said, "to pray
"The one spot from his soul away:
"To-night he comes, but not the same
"Will look!" At night he never came.

XI.

Nor next night: on the after-morn,
I went forth with a strength new-born:
The church was empty; something drew
My steps into the street; I knew
It led me to the market-place—
Where, lo,—on high—the father's face!

XII.

That horrible black scaffold drest—
The stapled block . . God sink the rest!
That head strapped back, that blinding vest,
Those knotted hands and naked breast—
Till near one busy hangman pressed—
And—on the neck these arms caressed. . . .

XIII.

No part in aught they hope or fear!
No Heaven with them, no Hell,—and here,
No Earth, not so much space as pens
My body in their worst of dens
But shall bear God and Man my cry—
Lies—lies, again—and still, they lie!

THE BRIGHTON COACH

BY GEORGE BARLOW

A YOUNG girl stood by the garden gate
  As the Brighton coach flew by;
The horses tore by the rose-wreathed door,
  They passed like a breath or a sigh.

But there just was time for the girl to see
  A lady with bright gold hair.—
"If only I were as rich as she,
  As happy, and half as fair!"

That was her sigh as the coach swept by,
  As it passed like a lightning gleam;
But the lady fair, with the bright gold hair,
  Had also her longing dream.—
"I'd give the world to be young like you,
  Ay, all that the world's wealth brings,
Beautiful girl with the eyes of blue
  And the bonnet with bright green strings."

So each heart longed. It is always so.
  For riches the young heart sighs;
But the world-worn heart is ready to part
  With the empty golden prize.
"Oh, to be there on the beautiful coach,
  Riding in silk and state!"
"Oh, to be you with the eyes of blue,
  Girl at the garden gate!"

[*From* From Dawn to Sunset (*Sonnenschein*). *By Special Permission of the Author.*]

THE MASK

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

I HAVE a smiling face,— she said,
  I have a jest for all I meet;
I have a garland for my head,
  And all its flowers are sweet,—
And so you call me gay, she said.

Grief taught to me this smile, she said,
  And Wrong did teach this jesting bold;
These flowers were plucked from garden-bed
  While a death-chime was tolled—
And what now will you say?—she said.

Behind no prison-grate, she said,
  Which slurs the sunshine half a mile,
Are captives so uncomforted,
  As souls behind a smile.
God's pity let us pray, she said.

I know my face is bright, she said,—
  Such brightness, dying suns diffuse!
I bear upon my forehead shed,
  The sign of what I lose,—
The ending of my day, she said.

If I dared leave this smile, she said,
  And take a moan upon my mouth,
And tie a cypress round my head,
  And let my tears run smooth,—
It were the happier way, she said.

And since that must not be, she said,
  I fain your bitter world would leave.
How calmly, calmly, smile the Dead,
  Who do not, therefore, grieve!
The yea of Heaven is yea, she said.

But in your bitter world, she said,
  Face-joy's a costly mask to wear,
And bought with pangs long nourished
  And rounded to despair.
Grief's earnest makes life's play, she said.

Ye weep for those who weep?—she said—
  Ah fools!—I bid you pass them by;
Go, weep for those whose hearts have bled,
  What time their eyes were dry!
Whom sadder can I say?—she said.

A WOMAN'S SHORTCOMINGS

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

She has laughed as softly as if she sighed;
  She has counted six and over,
Of a purse well filled, and a heart well tried—
  Oh, each a worthy lover!
They "give her time;" for her soul must slip
  Where the world has set the grooving:
She will lie to none with her fair red lip—
  But love seeks truer loving.

She trembles her fan in a sweetness dumb,
  As her thoughts were beyond recalling;
With a glance for *one*, and a glance for *some*,
  From her eyelids rising and falling.
—Speaks common words with a blushful air;
  —Hears bold words, unreproving:
But her silence says—what she never will swear—
  And love seeks better loving.

Go, lady! lean to the night-guitar,
  And drop a smile to the bringer;
Then smile as sweetly, when he is far,
  At the voice of an in-door singer!

Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
  Glance lightly, on their removing;
And join new vows to old perjuries—
  But dare not call it loving!

Unless you can think when the song is done.
  No other is soft in the rhythm;
Unless you can feel, when left by One,
  That all men beside go with him;
Unless you can know, when unpraised by his breath
  That your beauty itself wants proving;
Unless you can swear—"For life, for death!"—
  Oh, fear to call it loving!

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day,
  On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
  With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
  Through behoving and unbehoving;
Unless you can *die* when the dream is past—
  Oh, never call it loving!

A MAN'S REQUIREMENTS

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Love me, Sweet, with all thou art,
  Feeling, thinking, seeing,—
Love me in the lightest part,
  Love me in full being.

Love me with thine open youth
  In its frank surrender;
With the vowing of thy mouth,
  With its silence tender.

Love me with thine azure eyes,
  Made for earnest granting!
Taking colour from the skies,
  Can Heaven's truth be wanting?

Love me with their lids, that fall
  Snow-like at first meeting:
Love me with thine heart, that all
  The neighbours then see beating.

Love me with thine outstretched hand
  Freely—open-minded:
Love me with thy loitering foot,—
  Hearing one behind it.

Love me with thy voice, that turns
  Sudden faint above me;
Love me with thy blush that burns
  When I murmur "*Love me!*"

Love me with thy thinking soul—
  Break it to love-sighing;
Love me with thy thoughts that roll
  On through living—dying.

Love me in thy gorgeous airs,
  When the world has crowned thee!
Love me kneeling at thy prayers,
  With the angels round thee.

Love me pure, as musers do,
  Up the woodlands shady:
Love me gaily, fast, and true,
  As a winsome lady.

Through all hopes that keep us brave,
  Farther off or nigher,
Love me for the house and grave,—
  And for something higher.

Thus, if thou wilt prove me, dear,
  Woman's love no fable,
I will love *thee*—half a year—
  As a man is able.

A YEAR'S SPINNING

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

He listened at the porch that day
  To hear the wheel go on, and on,
And then it stopped—ran back away—
  While through the door he brought the sun:
  But now my spinning is all done.

He sate beside me, with an oath
  That love ne'er ended, once begun;
I smiled—believing for us both,
  What was the truth for only one;
  And now my spinning is all done.

My mother cursed me that I heard
  A young man's wooing as I spun.

Thanks, cruel mother, for that word.
  For I have, since, a harder known!
  And now my spinning is all done.

I thought—O God!—my first-born's cry
  Both voices to my ear would drown:
I listened in mine agony—
  It was the *silence* made me groan!
  And now my spinning is all done.

Bury me 'twixt my mother's grave,
  Who cursed me on her death-bed lone,
And my dead baby's—(God it save!)
  Who, not to bless me, would not moan.
  And now my spinning is all done.

A stone upon my heart and head,
  But no name written on the stone!
Sweet neighbours! whisper low instead,
  "This sinner was a loving one—
  And now her spinning is all done."

And let the door ajar remain,
  In case he should pass by anon;
And leave the wheel out very plain,
  That HE, when passing in the sun,
  May *see* the spinning is all done.

THE ROMANCE OF THE SWAN'S NEST

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

"So the dreams depart,
So the fading phantoms flee,
And the sharp reality
Now must act its part."
WESTWOOD'S *Beads from a Rosary.*

LITTLE Ellie sits alone
'Mid the beeches of a meadow,
By a stream-side, on the grass:
And the trees are showering down
Doubles of their leaves in shadow,
On her shining hair and face.

She has thrown her bonnet by,
And her feet she has been dipping
In the shallow water's flow;
Now she holds them nakedly
In her hands, all sleek and dripping,
While she rocketh to and fro.

Little Ellie sits alone,—
And the smile, she softly useth,
Fills the silence like a speech;
While she thinks what shall be done,—
And the sweetest pleasure chooseth
For her future within reach!

Little Ellie in her smile
Chooseth : : : "I will have a lover,
Riding on a steed of steeds!
He shall love me without guile;
And to *him* I will discover
That swan's nest among the reeds.

"And the steed shall be red-roan,
And the lover shall be noble,
With an eye that takes the breath,—
And the lute he plays upon
Shall strike ladies into trouble,
As his sword strikes men to death.

"And the steed, it shall be shod
All in silver, housed in azure,
And the mane shall swim the wind!
And the hoofs, along the sod,
Shall flash onward in a pleasure,
Till the shepherds look behind.

"But my lover will not prize
All the glory that he rides in,
When he gazes in my face!
He will say, 'O love, thine eyes
Build the shrine my soul abides in;
And I kneel here for thy grace.'

"Then, ay, then, he shall kneel low,—
With the red-roan steed anear him,
Which shall seem to understand,—
Till I answer, 'Rise, and go!
For the world must love and fear him
Whom I gift with heart and hand.'

"Then he will arise so pale,
I shall feel my own lips tremble
With a *yes* I must not say;
Nathless, maiden-brave, 'Farewell,'
I will utter and dissemble—
'Light to-morrow, with to-day.'

"Then he will ride through the hills,
To the wide world past the river,
There to put away all wrong!
To make straight distorted wills,—
And to empty the broad quiver
Which the wicked bear along.

"Three times shall a young foot-page
Swim the stream and climb the mountain,
And kneel down beside my feet—
'Lo! my master sends this gage,
Lady, for thy pity's counting!
What wilt thou exchange for it?'

"And the first time, I will send
A white rosebud for a guerdon,—
And the second time, a glove!
But the third time—I may bend
From my pride, and answer,'Pardon—
If he comes to take my love.'

"Then the young foot-page will run—
Then my lover will ride faster,
Till he kneeleth at my knee!—
'I am a duke's eldest son!
Thousand serfs do call me master,—
But, O Love, I love but *thee!*'

"He will kiss me on the mouth
Then, and lead me as a lover
Through the crowds that praise his deeds!
And, when soul-tied by one troth,
Unto *him* I will discover
That swan's nest among the reeds."

Little Ellie, with her smile
Not yet ended, rose up gaily,—
Tied the bonnet, donned the shoe,—
And went homeward, round a mile,
Just to see, as she did daily,
What more eggs were with the *two*.

Pushing through the elm-tree copse,
Winding by the stream, light-hearted,
Where the osier pathway leads—
Past the boughs she stoops—and stops!
Lo! the wild swan had deserted—
And a rat had gnawed the reeds.

Ellie went home sad and slow!
If she found the lover ever,
With his red-roan steed of steeds,
Sooth I know not! but I know
She could show him never—never,
That swan's nest among the reeds!

CHARLIE MACHREE

BY WILLIAM J. HOPPIN

Come over, come over the river to me,
If ye are my laddie, bold Charlie Machree!
Here's Mary McPherson and Susy O'Linn,
Who say ye're faint-hearted, and dare not plunge in.
But the dark, rolling river, though deep as the sea.
I know cannot scare you, nor keep you from me;
For stout is your back, and strong is your arm,
And the heart in your bosom is faithful and warm.
Come over, come over the river to me,
If ye are my laddie, bold Charlie Machree!

I see him! I see him! He's plunged in the tide!
His strong arms are dashing the big waves aside.
Oh! the dark, rolling water shoots swift as the sea
But blithe is the glance of his bonnie blue e'e;
His cheeks are like roses, twa buds on a bough,—
Who says ye're faint-hearted, my brave laddie, now?
Ho, ho! foaming river, ye may roar as ye go;
But ye canna bear Charlie to the dark loch below:
Come over, come over the river to me,
My true-hearted laddie, *my* Charlie Machree!

He's sinking! he's sinking! Oh, what shall I do!
Strike out, Charlie, boldly, ten strokes, and ye're through:
He's sinking, oh, Heaven! Ne'er fear, man, ne'er fear:
I've a kiss for ye, Charlie, as soon as ye're here!
He rises: I see him—five strokes, Charlie, mair—
He's shaking the wet from his bonnie brown hair;
He conquers the current, he gains on the sea.
Ho, where is the swimmer like Charlie Machree!
Come over the river, but once come to me,
And I'll love ye for ever, dear Charlie Machree!

He's sinking! he's gone! O God! it is I,
It is I who have killed him! Help! help!—he must
die.
Help! help! Ah! he rises! Strike out, and ye're free!
Ho, bravely done, Charlie,—once more, now, for me!
Now cling to the rock, now give me your hand,—
Ye're safe, dearest Charlie, ye're safe on the land!
Come rest on my bosom, if there ye can sleep:
I canna speak to ye; I only can weep.
Ye've crossed the wild river, ye've risked all for me,
And I'll part frae ye never, dear Charlie Machree!

SHELTERED

BY SARAH ORNE JEWETT

It was a cloudy, dismal day, and I was all alone,
For early in the morning John Earl and Nathan Stone
Came riding up the lane to say—I saw they both looked pale—
That Anderson the murderer had broken out of jail.

They only stopped a minute, to tell my man that he
Must go to the four corners, where all the folks would be;
They were going to hunt the country, for he only had been gone
An hour or so when they missed him, that morning just at dawn.

John never finished his breakfast; he saddled the old white mare.
She seemed to know there was trouble, and galloped as free and fair
And even a gait as she ever struck when she was a five-year-old:
The knowingest beast we ever had, and worth her weight in gold.

He turned in the saddle and called to me—I watched him from the door—
"I shan't be home to dinner," says he, "but I'll be back by four.
I'd fasten the doors if I was you, and keep at home to-day;"
And a little chill came over me as I watched him ride away.

I went in and washed the dishes—I was sort of scary too.
We had 'ranged to go away that day. I hadn't much to do,
Though I always had some sewing work, and I got it and sat down;
But the old clock tick-tacked loud at me, and I put away the gown.

I thought the story over: how Anderson had been
A clever, steady fellow, so far's they knew, till then;
Some said his wife had tried him, but he got to drinking hard.
Till last he struck her with an axe and killed her in the yard.

The only thing I heard he said was, he was most to blame;
But he fought the men that took him like a tiger. 'Twas a shame
He'd got away; he ought to swing: a man that killed his wife
And broke her skull in with an axe—he ought to lose his life!

Our house stood in a lonesome place, the woods were all around,
But I could see for quite a ways across the open ground;
I couldn't help, for the life o' me, a-looking now and then
All along the edge o' the growth, and listening for the men.

I thought they would find Anderson: he couldn't run till night,

For the farms were near together, and there must be a sight
Of men out hunting for him ; but when the clock struck three,
A neighbour's boy came up with word that John had sent to me.

He would be home by five o'clock. They'd scour the woods till dark ;
Some of the men would be off all night, but he and Andrew Clark
Would keep watch round his house and ours—I should not stay alone.
Poor John, he did the best he could, but what if he had known !

The boy could hardly stop to tell that the se-lec'men had said
They would pay fifty dollars for the man alive or dead;
And I felt another shiver go over me for fear
That John might get that money, though we were pinched that year.

I felt a little easier then, and went to work again :
The sky was getting cloudier, 'twas coming on to rain,
Before I knew, the clock struck six, and John had not come back ;
The rain began to spatter down, and all the sky was black.

I thought and thought, what shall I do if I'm alone all night ?
I wa'n't so brave as I am now. I lit another light;

And I stirred round and got supper, but I ate it all alone.
The wind was blowing more and more—I hate to hear it moan.

I was cutting rags to braid a rug—I sat there by the fire;
I wished I'd kep' the dog at home; the gale was rising higher;
I own I had hard thoughts o' John; I said he had no right
To leave his wife in that lonesome place alone that dreadful night.

And then I thought of the murderer, afraid of God and man;
I seemed to follow him all the time, whether he hid or ran;
I saw him crawl on his hands and knees through the icy mud in the rain,
And I wondered if he didn't wish he was back in his home again.

I fell asleep for an hour or two, and then I woke with a start;
A feeling come across me that took and stopped my heart;
I was 'fraid to look behind me; then I felt my heart begin;
And I saw right at the window-pane two eyes a-looking in.

I couldn't look away from them—the face was white as clay.
Those eyes, they make me shudder when I think of them to-day.

I knew right off 'twas Anderson. I couldn't move nor speak;
I thought I'd slip down on the floor, I felt so light and weak.

"O Lord," I thought, "what shall I do!" Some words begun to come,
Like some one whispered to me: I sat there, still and dumb:
"I was a stranger—took me in—in prison—visited me;"
And I says, "O Lord, I couldn't; it's a murderer, you see!"

And those eyes they watched me all the time, in dreadful still despair—
Most like the room looked warm and safe; he watched me sitting there;
And what 'twas made me do it, I don't know to this day,
But I opened the door and let him in—a murderer at bay.

He laid him right down on the floor, close up beside the fire.
I never saw such a wretched sight: he was covered thick with mire;
His clothes were torn to his very skin, and his hands were bleeding fast.
I gave him something to tie 'em up, and all my fears were past.

I filled the fire-place up with wood to get the creature warm,

And I fetched him a bowl o' milk to drink—I couldn't
do him harm;
And pretty soon he says, real low, "Do you know who
I be?"
And I says, "You lay there by the fire; I know you
won't hurt me."

I had been fierce as any one before I saw him there,
But I pitied him—a ruined man whose life had started
fair.
I some how or 'nother never felt that I was doing wrong,
And I watched him laying there asleep almost the whole
night long.

I thought once that I heard the men, and I was half
afraid
That they might come and find him there; and so I
went and staid
Close to the window, watching, and listening for a cry;
And he slept there like a little child—forgot his misery.

I almost hoped John wouldn't come till he could get
away;
And I went to the door and harked awhile, and saw
the dawn of day.
'Twas bad for him to have slept so long, but I couldn't
make him go
From the City of Refuge he had found; and he was
glad, I know.

It was years and years ago, but still I never can forget
How gray it looked that morning; the air was cold
and wet;

Only the wind would howl sometimes, or else the trees would creak—
All night I'd 'a given anything to hear somebody speak:

He heard me shut the door again, and started up so wild
And haggard that I 'most broke down. I wasn't reconciled
To have the poor thing run all day, chased like a wolf or bear;
But I knew he'd brought it on himself; his punishment was fair.

I gave him something more to eat; he couldn't touch it then.
"God pity you, poor soul!" says I. May I not see again.
A face like his, as he stood in the door and looked which way to go!
I watched him making towards the swamps, dead-lame and moving slow.

He had hardly spoken a word to me, but as he went away
He thanked me, and gave me such a look! 'twill last to my dying day.
"May God have mercy on me, as you have had!" says he;
And I choked, and couldn't say a word, and he limped away from me.

John came home bright and early. He'd fell and hurt his head,
And he stopped up to his father's; but he'd sent word, he said.

And told the boy to fetch me there—my cousin, Johnny Black—
But he went off with some other folks, who thought they'd found the track.

Oh, yes, they did catch Anderson, early that afternoon,
And carried him back to jail again, and tried and hung him soon.
Justice is justice; but I say, although they served him right,
I'm glad I harboured the murderer that stormy April night.

Some said I might have locked him up, and got the town reward;
But I couldn't have done it if I'd starved, and I do hope the Lord
Forgave it, if it was a sin; but I could never see
'Twas wrong to shelter a hunted man, trusting his life to me.

THE BEGGAR MAID

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Her arms across her breast she laid;
  She was more fair than words can say:
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
  Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down.
  To meet and greet her on her way;
"It is no wonder," said the lords,
  "She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
  She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ancles, one her eyes,
  One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
  In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
  "This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE

A FRAGMENT

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sunlit fall of rain.
  In crystal vapour everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And, far in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
  From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song:
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong:
Sometimes the sparhawk, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong:
  By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
  Above the teeming ground:

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
She seem'd a part of joyous Spring
A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mixt with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set:
And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings
With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid:
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

DORA

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

WITH Farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at them,
And often thought "I'll make them man and wife.
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William; but the youth, because
He had been always with her in the house,
Thought not of Dora.
Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said, "My son:
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die:
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora; she is well
To look to; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter: he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and he died
In foreign lands; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora; take her for your wife;
For I have wish'd this marriage, night and day,
For many years." But William answer'd short;
"I cannot marry Dora; by my life,
I will not marry Dora." Then the old man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands, and said:
"You will not, boy! you dare to answer thus!
But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to it;
Consider, William: take a month to think,
And let me have an answer to my wish;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall pack,

And never more darken my doors again."
But William answer'd madly; bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd at her
The less he liked her; and his ways were harsh;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then before
The month was out he left his father's house,
And hired himself to work within the fields;
And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and wed
A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
  Then, when the bells were ringing, Allan called
His niece and said: "My girl, I love you well;
But if you speak with him that was my son,
Or change a word with her he calls his wife,
My home is none of yours. My will is law.
And Dora promised, being meek. She thought
"It cannot be: my uncle's mind will change!"
And days went on, and there was born a boy
To William; then distresses came on him;
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate,
Heart-broken, and his father help'd him not.
But Dora stored what little she could save,
And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know
Who sent it; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.
  Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought
Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said:
  "I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he chose,
And for this orphan, I am come to you:

You know there has not been for these five years
So full a harvest: let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat; that when his heart is glad
Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone."
And Dora took the child, and went her way
Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies grew.
Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not; for none of all his men
Dare tell him Dora waited with the child;
And Dora would have risen and gone to him,
But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.
But when the morrow came, she rose and took
The child once more, and sat upon the mound;
And made a little wreath of all the flowers
That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his men at work,
And came and said; "Where were you yesterday?
Whose child is that? What are you doing here?"
So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground.
And answer'd softly, "This is William's child!"
"And did I not," said Allan, "did I not
Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again;
"Do with me as you will, but take the child
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone!"
And Allan said, "I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you!

You knew my word was law, and yet you dared
To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy;
But go you hence, and never see me more."
  So saying, he took the boy, that cried aloud
And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell
At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,
And the boy's cry came to her from the field,
More and more distant. She bow'd down her head
Remembering the day when first she came,
And all the things that had been. She bow'd down
And wept in secret; and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.
  Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood
Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise
To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, "My uncle took the boy;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you:
He says that he will never see me more."
Then answer'd Mary, "This shall never be,
That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself:
And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,
For he will teach him hardness, and to slight
His mother; therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him home;
And I will beg of him to take thee back;
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one house,
And work for William's child, until he grows
Of age to help us."
  So the women kissed
Each other, and set out, and reached the farm.
The door was off the latch: they peep'd, and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,
Like one that loved him ; and the lad stretch'd out
And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.
Then they came in ; but when the boy beheld
His mother, he cried out to come to her :
And Allan set him down, and Mary said :
"O Father !—if you let me call you so—
I never come a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child ; but now I come
For Dora : take her back ; she loves you well.
O Sir, when William died, he died at peace
With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he said,
He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife : but, Sir, he said
That he was wrong to cross his father thus :
'God bless him !' he said, 'and may he never know
The troubles I have gone thro' !' Then he turn'd
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am !
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
His father's memory ; and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before.
So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room ;
And all at once the old man burst in sobs :—
"I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.
May God forgive me !—I have been to blame.
Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times;
And all the man was broken with remorse;
And all his love came back a hundred-fold;
And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child,
Thinking of William.
So those four abode
Within one house together; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another mate;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

THE MERMAID

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

I

Who would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combing her hair
Under the sea,
In a golden curl
With a comb of pearl,
On a throne?

II

I would be a mermaid fair;
I would sing to myself the whole of the day;
With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair;
And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,
"Who is it loves me? who loves not me?
I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall,
Low adown, adown,

From under my starry sea-bud crown
Low adown, low and around,
And I should look like a fountain of gold
Springing alone
With a shrill inner sound,
Over the throne
In the midst of the hall;
Till that great sea-snake under the sea
From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate
With his large calm eyes for the love of me.
And all the mermen under the sea
Would feel their immortality
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III

But at night I would wander away, away,
I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,
And lightly vault from the throne and play
With the mermen in and out of the rocks;
We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,
On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson shells,
Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.
But if any came near I would call, and shriek,
And adown the steep like a wave I would leap
From the diamond ledges that jut from the dells
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list,
Of the bold merry mermen under the sea;
They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me,
In the purple twilights under the sea;
But the king of them all would carry me,
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,

In the branching jaspers under the sea;
Then all the dry pied things that be
In the hueless mosses under the sea
Would curl round my silver feet silently,
All looking up for the love of me.
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
All things that are forked and horned, and soft
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,
All looking down for the love of me.

GUINEVERE'S REMORSE

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

"GONE—my lord!
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain
And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
Farewell? I should have answered his farewell.
His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord the King,
My own true lord! how dare I call him mine?
The shadow of another cleaves to me,
And makes me one pollution: he, the King,
Call'd me polluted: shall I kill myself?
What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,
If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;
No, nor by living can I live it down.
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months
The months will add themselves and make the years,
The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be; that is but of the world
What else? What hope? I think there was a hope

Except he mock'd me when he spoke of hope;
His hope he call'd it; but he never mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
And blessed be the King, who hath forgiven
My wickedness to him, and left me hope
That in mine own heart I can live down sin
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
Before high God. Ah, great and gentle lord,
Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint
Among his warring senses, to thy knights—
To whom my false voluptuous pride, that took
Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-despised the height
To which I would not or I could not climb—
I thought I could not breathe in that fine air
That pure severity of perfect light—
I wanted warmth and colour which I found
In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,
Thou art the highest and most human too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
Will tell the King I love him tho' so late?
Now—ere he goes to the great Battle? none:
Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah, my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
It was my duty to have loved the highest:
It surely was my profit had I known:
It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another."

THE GRANDMOTHER'S APOLOGY

BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

I

And Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne ?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written : she never was over-wise,
Never the wife for Willy : he wouldn't take my advice.

II

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty ! but I was against it for [one.
Eh !—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

III

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock ;
Never a man could fling him : for Willy stood like a rock.
" Here's a leg for a babe of a week ! " says doctor ; and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

IV

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue !
I ought to have gone before him : I wonder he went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie : I have not long to stay ;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V

Why do you look at me, Annie ? you think I am hard and cold ;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old :
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie : it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time : I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar !
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

IX

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week
and a day;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle
of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been!
But soiling another, Annie, will never make oneself
clean.

X

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an even-
ing late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road
at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrupt
the nightingale.

XI

All of a sudden he stopt: there past by the gate of the
farm,
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew
how; [now.
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry

XII

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he
meant; [went.
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking courtsey and
And I said, "Let us part: in a hundred years it'll all
be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good
name."

XIII

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine :
" Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill ;
But marry me out of hand : we two shall be happy still."

XIV

" Marry you, Willy ! " said I, " but I needs must speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind."
But he turned and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, " No, love, no ; "
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death.
There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Annie, not since I had been a [wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain:
I look'd at the still little body, his trouble had all been [in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn:
But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay:
Kind, like a man, was he; like a man, too, would have his way:
Never jealous—not he: we had many a happy year;
And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

XIX

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died:
I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget:
But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you:
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team :
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed—
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive ;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
And Willy, my eldest born, at nigh threescore and ten ;
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve :
And the neighbours come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ;
I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

XXIV

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had ;
And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease ;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

XXV

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain;
And happy has been my life; but I would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour,—
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext?

XXVII

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie: thank God that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now: you cannot have long to stay.

THE VEIL

BY VICTOR HUGO

THE SISTER

WHY, brother, why upon me stare?
Why do your brows so fiercely lower?
Your eyes like funeral torches glare,
Beneath their gloomy looks I cower.

Why do I see your sashes rent ?
  Why have you thrice your fingers laid
Upon the sheath ? What dire intent
  Makes you half draw the glittering blade ?

FIRST BROTHER.

Raised you to-day your veil, and face displayed ?

SISTER.

Home from the bath my path I took—
  Brothers ! look not so terribly !—
And I was hidden from the look
  Of every unbeliever's eye.
But as the Mosque I hurried by,
  Close covered in my palanquin,
Stifled beneath the mid-day sky,
  I loosed my veil to breathe between.

SECOND BROTHER.

Did not a man then pass in Cafton green ?

SISTER.

Ah, yes, perhaps it may be so ;
  But he ne'er saw my face. My brothers,
Together you are whispering low—
  What whisper you to one another ?
You would not kill me ? On your soul
  He saw me not ! My oath believe !
Have mercy ! Your blind rage control !
  Your poor young sister, O reprieve !

THIRD BROTHER.

Blood-red I saw the sun sink down at eve.

SISTER.

Mercy, O mercy! Brothers, cease,
  Your daggers stab me to the heart!
Brothers! I cling about your knees!
  O veil! white veil! the cause thou art!
Brothers! your dying sister prop,
  Tear not my bleeding hand away—
Darkness comes o'er me—with me stop—
  The veil of death shuts out the day.

FOURTH BROTHER.

Unlifted by your hands this veil will stay.

[*By Special Permission of the Translator, Dean Carrington.*]

A WOMAN'S LOVE

BY COL. JOHN HAY

A SENTINEL angel sitting high in glory
Heard this shrill wail ring out from Purgatory:
"Have mercy, mighty angel, hear my story!

"I loved,—and, blind with passionate love, I fell.
Love brought me down to death, and death to Hell.
For God is just, and death for sin is well.

"I do not rage against His high decree,
Nor for myself do ask that grace shall be;
But for my love on earth who mourns for me.

"Great Spirit! let me see my love again
And comfort him one hour, and I were fain
To pay a thousand years of fire and pain."

Then said the pitying angel, "Nay, repent
That wild vow! Look, the dial-finger's bent
Down to the last hour of thy punishment!"

But still she wailed, "I pray thee, let me go
I cannot rise to peace and leave him so.
Oh, let me soothe him in his bitter woe!"

The brazen gates ground sullenly ajar,
And upwards, joyous, like a rising star,
She rose and vanished in the ether far.

But soon adown the dying sunset sailing,
And like a wounded bird her pinions trailing,
She fluttered back, with broken-hearted wailing.

She sobbed, "I found him by the summer sea
Reclined, his head upon a maiden's knee,—
She curled his hair and kissed him. Woe is me!"

She wept, "Now let my punishment begin!
I have been fond and foolish. Let me in
To expiate my sorrow and my sin."

The angel answered, "Nay, sad soul, go higher!
To be deceived in your true heart's desire
Was bitterer than a thousand years of fire!"

[*By Permission of Messrs. George Routledge & Sons, Limited.*]

LOVE'S PRAYER

BY COL. JOHN HAY

If Heaven would hear my prayer,
My dearest wish would be,
Thy sorrows not to share,
But take them all on me;
If Heaven would hear my prayer.

I'd beg with prayers and sighs
That never a tear might flow
From out thy lovely eyes,
If Heaven might grant it so;
Mine be the tears and sighs.

No cloud thy brow should cover,
But smiles each other chase
From lips to eyes all over
Thy sweet and sunny face;
The clouds my heart should cover.

That all thy path be light
Let darkness fall on me;
If all thy days be bright,
Mine black as night could be.
My love would light my night.

For thou art more than life,
And if our fate should set
Life and my love at strife,
How could I then forget
I love thee more than life?

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COUNTESS JUTTA

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE

THE Countess Jutta passed over the Rhine
In a light canoe by the moon's pale shine.
The handmaid rows and the Countess speaks:
"Seest thou not there where the water breaks
Seven corpses swim
In the moonlight dim?
So sorrowful swim the dead!

"They were seven knights full of fire and youth,
They sank on my heart and swore me truth.
I trusted them; but for Truth's sweet sake,
Lest they should be tempted their oaths to break,
I had them bound,
And tenderly drowned!
So sorrowful swim the dead!"

The merry Countess laughed outright!
It rang so wild in the startled night!
Up to the waist the dead men rise
And stretch lean fingers to the skies.
They nod and stare
With a glassy glare!
So sorrowful swim the dead!

THE MILLER AND THE MAID

BY F. N. SCOTT

Across the heath and down the hill,
Aback of patient Dobbin,
The farmer's daughter rides to mill,
And mocks the thrush and robin.

For saddle she's a sack of grain,
She sidewise sits and chirrups;
A finger in old Dobbin's mane
Is good as forty stirrups.

The miller comes—a merry blade!—
And doffs his hat and greets her:
"What wish you here, my pretty maid?"
"I've brought a sack of wheat, sir."

"And have you gold to give for grist?"
"Not I, we're poor, alack! sir;
But take you toll—a tenth, I wist—
From what is in my sack, sir."

He lifts her lightly from her seat,
And laughs—a merry miller!
"I cannot take my toll in wheat,
I must have gold or siller.

"But since you've brought nor coin nor scrip"
He smiles and fondly eyes her—
"I'll ask no toll but from your lip—
One kiss! who'll be the wiser?"

The maiden blushed and bowed her head,
And with her apron fingered,
And pouted out her lips of red
Where countless kisses lingered.

"A single kiss?" (She smiled in glee,
As who would say, "I've caught you.")
"My father said your toll would be
A tenth of what I brought you."

The mill-stream shouted to the sands:
"He kissed the farmer's daughter!"
But the grim old wheel stretched out his hands
And spanked the saucy water.

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—

You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone?*
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

THE GAY GOS-HAWK

OLD BALLAD

"O WELL is me, my gay gos-hawk,
That you can speak and flee;
For you can carry a love-letter
To my true love frae me."

"O how can I carry a letter to her,
Or how should I her know?

I bear a tongue ne'er wi' her spak',
  And eyes that ne'er her saw."

"The white o' my love's skin is white
  As down o' dove or maw;
The red o' my love's cheek is red
  As blood that's spilt on snaw.

"When ye come to the castle,
  Light on the tree of ash,
And sit you there and sing our loves
  As she comes frae the mass.

"Four and twenty fair ladies
  Will to the mass repair;
And weel may ye my lady ken,
  The fairest lady there."

When the gos-hawk flew to that castle,
  He lighted on the ash;
And there he sat and sang their loves
  As she came frae the mass.

"Stay where ye be, my maidens a',
  And sip red wine anon,
Till I go to my west window
  And hear a birdie's moan."

She's gane unto her west window,
  The bolt she fainly drew;
And unto that lady's white, white neck
  The bird a letter threw.

"Ye're bidden to send your love a send,
  For he has sent you twa;
And tell him where he may see you soon,
  Or he cannot live ava."

"I send him the ring from my finger,
  The garland off my hair,
I send him the heart that's in my breast;
  What would my love have mair?
And at the fourth kirk in fair Scotland,
  Ye'll bid him wait for me there."

She hied her to her father dear
  As fast as gang could she:
"I'm sick at the heart, my father dear;
  An asking grant you me!"
"Ask me na for that Scottish lord,
  For him ye'll never see!"

"An asking, an asking, dear father!" she says,
  "An asking grant you me;
That if I die in fair England,
  In Scotland ye'll bury me.

"At the first kirk o' fair Scotland,
  You cause the bells be rung;
At the second kirk o' fair Scotland,
  You cause the mass be sung;

"At the third kirk o' fair Scotland,
  You deal gold for my sake;
At the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,
  O there you'll bury me at!

"This is all my asking, father,
  I pray you grant it me!"
"Your asking is but small," he said;
  "Weel granted it shall be.
But why do ye talk o' suchlike things?
  For ye arena going to dee."

The lady's gane to her chamber,
  And a moanfu' woman was she,
As gin she had ta'en a sudden brash,
  And were about to dee.

The lady's gane to her chamber
  As fast as she could fare;
And she has drunk a sleepy draught,
  She mix'd it wi' mickle care.

She's fallen into a heavy trance,
  And pale and cold was she;
She seemed to be as surely dead
  As ony corpse could be.

Out and spak' an auld witch-wife,
  At the fireside sat she:
"Gin she has killed herself for love,
  I wot it weel may be:

"But drap the het lead on her cheek,
  And drap it on her chin,
And rap it on her bosom white,
  And she'll maybe speak again.
'Tis much that a young lady will do
  To her true love to win."

They drapped the het lead on her cheek,
  They drapped it on her chin,
They drapped it on her bosom white,
  But she spake none again.

Her brothers they went to a room,
  To make to her a bier;
The broads were a' o' the cedar wood,
  The edges o' silver clear.

Her sisters they went to a room,
  To make to her a sark;
The cloth was a' o' the satin fine,
  And the stitching silken-wark.

"Now well is me, my gay gos-hawk,
  That ye can speak and flee!
Come show me any love-tokens
  That you have brought to me."

"She sends you the ring frae her white finger,
  The garland frae her hair;
She sends you the heart within her breast;
  And what would you have mair?
And at the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,
  She bids you wait for her there."

"Come hither, all my merry young men!
  And drink the good red wine;
For we must on towards fair England
  To free my love frae pine."

The funeral came into fair Scotland,
  And they gart the bells be rung;
And when it came to the second kirk,
  They gart the mass be sung.

And when it came to the third kirk,
  They dealt gold for her sake;
And when it came to the fourth kirk,
  Her love was waiting thereat.

At the fourth kirk in fair Scotland
  Stood spearmen in a row;
And up and started her ain true love,
  The chieftain over them a'.

"Set down, set down the bier," he says,
"Till I look upon the dead;
The last time that I saw her face,
Its colour was warm and red."

He stripped the sheet from aff her face
A little below the chin;
The lady then she open'd her eyes,
And looked full on him.

"O give me a shive o' your bread, love,
O give me a cup o' your wine!
Long have I fasted for your sake,
And now I fain would dine.

"Gae hame, gae hame, my seven brothers,
Gae hame and blaw the horn!
And ye may say that ye sought my skaith,
And that I hae gi'en you the scorn.

"I cam' na here to bonny Scotland
To lie down in the clay;
But I cam' here to bonny Scotland
To wear the silks sae gay!

"I cam' na here to bonny Scotland
Amang the dead to rest;
But I cam' here to bonny Scotland
To the man that I lo'e best!"

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

BY WILLIAM J. MICKLE

And are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think o' wark?
Ye jades, lay by your wheel;

Is this the time to spin a thread,
  When Colin's at the door?
Reach down my cloak, I'll to the quay,
  And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck about the house,
  There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
  When our gudeman's awa.

And gie to me my bigonet,
  My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
  That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
  My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
  For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak a clean fireside,
  Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown
  And Jock his Sunday coat;
And mak their shoon as black as slaes,
  Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
  For he's been long awa.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop
  Been fed this month and mair;
Mak haste and thraw their necks about,
  That Colin weel may fare;
And spread the table neat and clean,
  Gar ilka thing look braw,
For wha can tell how Colin fared
  When he was far awa?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
  His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
  As he comes up the stair.
And will I see his face again?
  And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
  In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's well, and weel content,
  I hae nae mair to crave;
And gin I live to keep him sae,
  I'm blest aboon the lave:
And will I see his face again?
  And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
  In troth I'm like to greet.

For there's nae luck about the house,
  There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
  When our gudeman's awa.

THE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

BY CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

COME live with me, and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall, on an ivory table, be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my Love.

THE SINGING LEAVES

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

I

"What fairings will ye that I bring?"
Said the King to his daughters three;
"For I to Vanity Fair am boun',
Now say what shall they be?"

Then up and spake the eldest daughter,
That lady tall and grand:

"Oh, bring me pearls and diamonds great,
And gold rings for my hand."

Thereafter spake the second daughter,
That was both white and red:
"For me bring silks that will stand alone,
And a gold comb for my head."

Then came the turn of the least daughter,
That was whiter than thistle-down,
And among the gold of her blithesome hair
Dim shone the golden crown.

"There came a bird this morning,
And sang 'neath my bower eaves,
Till I dreamed, as his music made me,
'Ask thou for the Singing Leaves.'"

Then the brow of the King swelled crimson
With a flush of angry scorn:
"Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,
And chosen as ye were born;

"But she, like a thing of peasant race,
That is happy binding the sheaves;"
Then he saw her dead mother in her face,
And said, "Thou shalt have thy leaves."

II

He mounted and rode three days and nights
Till he came to Vanity Fair,
And 't was easy to buy the gems and the silk,
But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,
And asked of every tree,

"Oh, if you have ever a Singing Leaf,
  I pray you give it me!"

But the trees all kept their counsel,
  And never a word said they,
Only there sighed from the pine-tops
  A music of seas far away.

Only the pattering aspen
  Made a sound of growing rain,
That fell ever faster and faster,
  Then faltered to silence again.

"Oh, where shall I find a little foot-page
  That would win both hose and shoon,
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves
  If they grow under the moon?"

Then lightly turned him Walter the page,
  By the stirrup as he ran:
"Now pledge you me the truesome word
  Of a king and gentleman,

"That you will give me the first, first thing
  You meet at your castle-gate,
And the Princess shall get the Singing Leaves,
  Or mine be a traitor's fate."

The King's head dropt upon his breast
  A moment, as it might be;
'T will be my dog, he thought, and said,
  "My faith I plight to thee."

Then Walter took from next his heart
  A packet small and thin,
"Now give you this to the Princess Anne,
  The Singing Leaves are therein."

III

As the King rode in at his castle-gate,
  A maiden to meet him ran,
And "Welcome, father!" she laughed and cried
  Together, the Princess Anne.

"Lo, here the Singing Leaves," quoth he,
  "And woe, but they cost me dear!"
She took the packet, and the smile
  Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her heart,
  And then gushed up again,
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun
  Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,
  Sang: "I am Walter the page,
And the songs I sing 'neath thy window
  Are my only heritage."

And the second Leaf sang: "But in the land
  That is neither on earth nor sea,
My lute and I are lords of more
  Than thrice this kingdom's fee."

And the third Leaf sang, "Be mine! Be mine!"
  And ever it sang, "Be mine!"
Then sweeter it sang and ever sweeter,
  And said, "I am thine, thine, thine!"

At the first Leaf she grew pale enough,
  At the second she turned aside,
At the third, 't was as if a lily flushed
  With a rose's red heart's tide.

"Good counsel gave the bird," said she;
"I have my hope thrice o'er,
For they sing to my very heart," she said;
"And it sings to them evermore."

She brought to him her beauty and truth,
But and broad earldoms three,
And he made her queen of the broader lands
He held of his lute in fee.

GO WHERE GLORY WAITS THEE

BY THOMAS MOORE

Go where glory waits thee,
But while fame elates thee,
Oh! still remember me.
When the praise thou meetest
To thine ear is sweetest,
Oh! then remember me.
Other arms may press thee,
Dearer friends caress thee,
All the joys that bless thee
Sweeter far may be;
But when friends are nearest,
And when joys are dearest,
Oh! then remember me.

When at eve thou rovest
By the star thou lovest,
Oh! then remember me.
Think, when home returning,
Bright we've seen it burning,
Oh! thus remember me.

Oft as summer closes,
When thine eye reposes
On its ling'ring roses,
  Once so loved by thee,
Think of her who wove them,
Her who made thee love them,
  Oh! then remember me.

When, around thee dying,
Autumn leaves are lying,
  O then remember me.
And, at night, when gazing
On the gay hearth blazing,
  Oh! still remember me.
Then, should music, stealing
All the soul of feeling,
To thy heart appealing,
  Draw one tear from thee;
Then let memory bring thee,—
Strains I used to sing thee,—
  Oh! then remember me.

ISABELLA, OR THE POT OF BASIL

BY JOHN KEATS

[*Stanzas LII to LXIII*]*

THEN in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews
  Of precious flowers plucked in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze
  Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—

* This excerpt from Keats' beautiful poem takes up the story at the point where Isabella has discovered the body of her murdered lover, and has hidden his head in the pot of basil.

She wrapped it up; and for its tomb did choose
  A garden pot wherein she laid it by,
And covered it with mould, and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
  And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
  And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
  And the new morn she saw not: but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moistened it with tears unto the core.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,
  Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers
  Of Basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,
  From the vast-mouldering head there shut from view:
So that the jewel, safely casketed,
Came forth, and in perfuméd leafits spread.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile!
  O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,
  Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile;
  Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs,

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,
  From the deep throat of sad Melpomene!

Through bronzéd lyre in tragic order go,
  And touch the strings into a mystery;
Sound mournfully upon the winds and low;
  For simple Isabel is soon to be
Among the dead: She withers like a palm
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

O leave the palm to wither by itself;
  Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour!—
It may not be—those Baälites of pelf,
  Her brethren noted the continual shower
From her dead eyes; and many a curious elf,
  Among her kindred, wondered that such dower
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside
By one marked out to be a Noble's bride.

And, furthermore, her brethren wondered much
  Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,
And why it flourished, as by magic touch;
  Greatly they wondered what the thing might mean:
They could not surely give belief, that such
  A very nothing would have power to wean
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

Therefore they watched a time when they might sift
  This hidden whim; and long they watched in vain;
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,
  And seldom felt she any hunger-pain;
And when she felt, she hurried back, as swift
  As bird on wing to breast its eggs again;
And patient as a hen-bird, sat her there
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

Yet they contrived to steal the Basil-pot,
  And to examine it in secret place:

The thing was vile with green and livid spot,
  And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face:
The guerdon of their murder they had got,
  And so left Florence in a moment's space,
Never to turn again.—Away they went,
With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away!
  O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,
  From isles Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!
Spirits of grief, sing not your "Well-a-way!"
  For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die;
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

Piteous she looked on dead and senseless things,
  Asking for her lost Basil amorously;
And with melodious chuckle in the strings
  Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry
After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,
  To ask him where her Basil was; and why
'Twas hid from her: "For cruel 'tis," said she,
"To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,
  Imploring for the Basil to the last.
No heart was there in Florence but did mourn
  In pity of her love, so overcast.
And a sad ditty of this story born
  From mouth to mouth through all the country passed:
Still is the burden sung—"O cruelty,
To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"

A LEGEND OF PROVENCE

BY ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

LONG years ago, a dense and flowering wood,
Still more concealed where the white convent stood,
Borne on its perfumed wings the title came:
"Our Lady of the Hawthorns" is its name.
Of all the nuns, no heart was half so light,
No eyelids veiling glances half as bright,
No step that glided with such noiseless feet,
No face that looked so tender or so sweet,
No voice that rose in choir so pure, so clear,
No heart to all the others half so dear,
No soul in childlike faith so undefiled,
As Sister Angela's, the "Convent Child."
For thus they loved to call her. She had known
No home, no love, no kindred, save her own.
An orphan, to their tender nursing given,
Child, plaything, pupil, now the Bride of Heaven.
And she it was who trimmed the lamp's red light
That swung before the altar, day and night;
Her hands it was whose patient skill could trace
The finest broidery, weave the costliest lace;
But most of all, her first and dearest care,
The office she would never miss or share,
Was every day to weave fresh garlands sweet,
To place before the shrine at Mary's feet.
Each evening through the year, with equal care,
She placed her flowers; then kneeling down in prayer,
As their faint perfume rose before the shrine,
So rose her thoughts, as pure and as divine.
She knelt until the shades grew dim without,
Till one by one the altar lights shone out,

Till one by one the Nuns, like shadows dim,
Gathered around to chant their vesper hymn;
Her voice then led the music's wingéd flight,
And "Ave, Maris Stella" filled the night.

But wherefore linger on those days of peace?
When storms draw near, then quiet hours must cease
War, cruel war, defaced the land, and came
So near the convent with its breath of flame,
That, seeking shelter, frightened peasants fled,
Sobbing out tales of coming fear and dread.
Till after a fierce skirmish, down the road,
One night came straggling soldiers, with their load
Of wounded, dying comrades; and the band,
Half pleading, yet as if they could command,
Summoned the trembling Sisters, craved their care,
Then rode away and left the wounded there.
But soon compassion bade all fear depart,
And bidding every Sister do her part,
Some prepare simples, healing salves, or bands
The Abbess chose the more experienced hands,
To dress the wounds needing most skilful care;
Yet even the youngest Novice took her share
To Angela, who had but ready will
And tender pity, yet no special skill,
Was given the charge of a young foreign Knight,
Whose wounds were painful, but whose danger slight.
Day after day she watched beside his bed,
And first in hushed repose the hours fled:
His feverish moans alone the silence stirred,
Or her soft voice, uttering some pious word.
At last the fever left him; day by day
The hours, no longer silent, passed away.

What could she speak of? First, to still his plaints
She told him legends of the martyred Saints;
Described the pangs, which, through God's plenteous grace,
Had gained their souls so high and bright a place.
So she described the glorious pomp sublime,
In which the chapel shone at Easter time,
The Banners, Vestments, gold, and colours bright,
Counted how many tapers gave their light;
Then, in minute detail went on to say,
How the High Altar looked on Christmas day:
The kings and shepherds, all in green and red,
And a bright star of jewels overhead.
The Knight unwearied listened; till at last,
He too described the glories of his past;
Tourney, and joust, and pageant bright and fair.
And all the lovely ladies who were there.
But half-incredulous she heard. Could this—
This be the world? this place of love and bliss!
Where then was hid the strange and hideous charm,
That never failed to bring the gazer harm?
She crossed herself, yet asked, and listened still,
And still the Knight described with all his skill
The glorious world of joy, all joys above,
Transfigured in the golden mist of love.
Spread, spread your wings, ye angel guardians bright,
And shield these dazzling phantoms from her sight!
But no; days passed, matins and vespers rang,
And still the quiet Nuns toiled, prayed, and sang,
And never guessed the fatal, coiling net
Which every day drew near, and nearer yet,
Around their darling; for she went and came
About her duties, outwardly the same.

The same? ah, no! even when she knelt to pray,
Some charméd dream kept all her heart away.
So days went on, until the convent gate
Opened one night. Who durst go forth so late?
Across the moonlit grass, with stealthy tread,
Two silent, shrouded figures passed and fled.
And all was silent, save the moaning seas,
That sobbed and pleaded, and a wailing breeze
That sighed among the perfumed hawthorn trees.

What need to tell that dream so bright and brief,
Of joy unchequered by a dread of grief?
What need to tell how all such dreams must fade,
Before the slow, foreboding, dreaded shade,
That floated nearer, until pomp and pride,
Pleasure and wealth, were summoned to her side,
To bid, at least, the noisy hours forget,
And clamour down the whispers of regret.
Still Angela strove to dream, and strove in vain;
Awakened once, she could not sleep again.
She saw, each day and hour, more worthless grown
The heart for which she cast away her own;
And her soul learnt, through bitterest inward strife
The slight, frail love for which she wrecked her life,
The phantom for which all her hope was given,
The cold bleak earth for which she bartered heaven.
Years fled, and she grew reckless more and more,
Until the humblest peasant closed his door,
And where she passed, fair dames, in scorn and
pride,
Shuddered, and drew their rustling robes aside.
At last a yearning seemed to fill her soul,
A longing that was stronger than control:

Once more, just once again, to see the place
That knew her young and innocent; to retrace
The long and weary southern path; to gaze
Upon the haven of her childish days;
Once more beneath the convent roof to lie;
Once more to look upon her home—and die!

Weighed down with weary days, her failing strength
Grew less each hour, till one day's dawn at length,
As first its rays flooded the world with light,
Showed the broad waters, glittering blue and bright,
And where, amid the leafy hawthorn wood,
Just as of old the quiet cloister stood.
Would any know her? Nay, no fear. Her face
Had lost all trace of youth, of joy, of grace,
Of the pure happy soul they used to know—
The novice Angela—so long ago.
She rang the convent bell. The well-known sound
Smote on her heart, and bowed her to the ground,
And she, who had not wept for long dry years,
Felt the strange rush of unaccustomed tears;
Crouching against the iron gate, she laid
Her weary head against the bars, and prayed:
But nearer footsteps drew, then seemed to wait;
And then she heard the opening of the grate,
And saw the withered face, on which awoke
Pity and sorrow, as the portress spoke,
And asked the stranger's bidding: "Take me in,"
She faltered, "Sister Monica, from sin,
And sorrow, and despair, that will not cease;
Oh, take me in, and let me die in peace:
With soothing words the Sister bade her wait,
Until she brought the key to unbar the gate.

The beggar tried to thank her as she lay,
And heard the echoing footsteps die away.
But what soft voice was that which sounded near,
And stirred strange trouble in her heart to hear?
She raised her head; she saw—she seemed to know—
A face that came from long, long years ago:
Herself; yet not as when she fled away,
The young and blooming novice, fair and gay,
But a grave woman, gentle and serene:
The outcast knew it—*what she might have been.*
But, as she gazed and gazed, a radiance bright
Filled all the place with strange and sudden light;
The Nun was there no longer, but instead,
A figure with a circle round its head,
A ring of glory; and a face, so meek,
So soft, so tender. . . . Angela strove to speak,
And stretched her hands out, crying, "Mary mild,
Mother of mercy, help me!—help your child!"
And Mary answered, "From thy bitter past,
Welcome my child! oh, welcome home at last!
I filled thy place. Thy flight is known to none,
For all thy daily duties I have done;
Gathered thy flowers, and prayed, and sung, and slept:
Didst thou not know, poor child, *thy place was kept?*
Kind hearts are here; yet would the tenderest one
Have limits to its mercy: God has none.
And man's forgiveness may be true and sweet,
But yet he stoops to give it. More complete
Is Love that lays forgiveness at thy feet,
And pleads with thee to raise it. Only Heaven
Means *crowned*, not *vanquished*, when it says 'Forgiven!'"
Back hurried Sister Monica; but where

Was the poor beggar she left lying there ?
Gone ; and she searched in vain, and sought the place
For that wan woman, with the piteous face :
But only Angela at the gateway stood,
Laden with hawthorn blossoms from the wood.
And never did a day pass by again,
But the old portress, with a sigh of pain,
Would sorrow for her loitering : with a prayer
That the poor beggar, in her wild despair,
Might not have come to any ill ; and when
She ended, "God forgive her !" humbly then
Did Angela bow her head, and say "Amen !"
Years passed away. Then, one dark day of dread
Saw all the sisters kneeling round a bed,
Where Angela lay dying ; every breath
Struggling beneath the heavy hand of death.
But suddenly a flush lit up her cheek,
She raised her wan right hand, and strove to speak.
In sorrowing love they listened ; not a sound
Or sigh disturbed the utter silence round.
The very tapers' flames were scarcely stirred,
In such hushed awe the sisters knelt and heard.
And through that silence Angela told her life :
Her sin, her flight ; the sorrow and the strife,
And the return ; and then clear, low and calm,
"Praise God for me, my sisters ;" and the psalm
Rang up to heaven, far and clear and wide,
Again and yet again, then sank and died ;
While her white face had such a smile of peace,
They saw she never heard the music cease ;
And weeping sisters laid her in her tomb,
Crowned with a wreath of perfumed hawthorn bloom.

And thus the Legend ended. It may be
Something is hidden in the mystery,
Besides the lesson of God's pardon shown,
Never enough believed, or asked, or known:
Have we not all, amid life's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a noble life
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings, and feel it near,
And just within our reach? It was. And yet
We lost it in this daily jar and fret,
And now live idle in a vague regret.
But still *our place is kept*, and it will wait,
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late:
No star is ever lost we once have seen,
We always may be what we might have been:

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;

The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;

Until her bosom must have made
  The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
  Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
  Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
  Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
  The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
  Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
  She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
  Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
  Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
  Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
  Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
  For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
  Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
  And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
  And he is clothed in white,

I'll take his hand and go with him
  To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
  And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
  Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
  With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
  Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
  That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
  Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
  Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
  I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
  Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
  Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! we two, we two, thou sayst!
  Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
  To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
  Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
  Where the lady Mary is,

With her five handmaidens, whose names
  Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
  Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
  And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
  Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
  Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb;
  Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
  Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
  My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
  To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
  Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
  To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
  Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
  With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
  Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
  Less sad of speech than mild,—

"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
  The light thrilled towards her, fill'd,
With angels in strong level flight.
  Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
  Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
  The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
  And wept. (I heard her tears.)

THE RED FLAG

An Incident of the French Revolution

BY HARRIET KENDALL

"A PRETTY comedy and tragedy!"
They say. Ah! *mesdames*, in your *salons* you
Are free to jest, men deem your sallies wit.
Mon Dieu! I know not, if to answer jest
With jest, and play the part of life and death
Be comedy and tragedy. 'Tis well
Some scenes go on with music and with smile,
Else we might judge the play too long—too long!

'Twas harvest in the vineyards of the Loire,
The pipers piped, the maidens danced and sang,
The oxen drew their loaded wains along,
And, throned beneath a coronal of vine,
Larenne, the queen of the vine harvest, reigned
In undisputed sovereignty, while praise
Went up to God who made the earth increase,
Such tribute as the worshippers of old
Might chant at feast, or victory in war.

Anon a grim power through the country spread,
The spirit of a fierce distrust that burned
As a great war-flame. Priests and seers foretold
A time of woe, when France's throne should be
A mockery—the purple robe a pall.

Far o'er the vine-fields rang the Angelus,
And by the belfry stood the fair Larenne,
While o'er her bent the gallant Comte Vallaire,
The lord of the great château on the hill,
Who loved Larenne, as men love only once.
"Seigneur, you mock! Yet hear me. You shall know
The bold blood of the peasant flows as free
As in the blue veins of your ancient race.
Play not at love with me; patrician lips
Will find your homage sweeter, Comte Vallaire!
The time is near when many swords shall leap
Out of their scabbards. Until now you deemed
The people powerless to strike. Then shall
You pay us in proportion to our hate."

"Larenne, your dream is of impossible worlds;
What doth allure you hath allured before
With glorious beguilement. Men have striven
In blindness of revolt for what they deem
The people's liberty. 'Tis not for them
To strike the monarch's crown, regenerate
The nation, and redress each wrong. Larenne,
Your dream is mad, but since you bid me go
From hatred of my race, I will obey.
Only remember this, through all the years,
Whatever future comes, whatever fate,
One life is yours, to be laid down for you."

Through Paris rings the cry—"To arms! to arms!
The carabineers rush forth, the barricades
Are raised, the tempest leads men where it will.
To advance is certain death, yet no man thinks
One moment of retreat. To stay is still
To die, yet no man flees. The Bastille clock
Tolls out its menace ev'ry gruesome hour,
While the drums beat, and ev'ry *gamin* cries
"France for the people! Down with tyranny!"
A shower of grape beats on the barricade,
A thrilling roar of musketry is heard;
The barricades are taken, lost again,
And then retaken; wives and mothers cry
"O God! how will it end?" While blood still flows.

High o'er the barricade the red flag waved,
The flag of revolution. Suddenly
Shouts rent the air as a great volley burst
Above the barricade. The red flag fell.
"Who will replant the flag?" one Royalist jeers,
Emboldened Nationalists press to the front,
While wedged between the barricades half mad
The people fight with lion fearlessness.
"Who will replant the flag?" A woman's voice
Peals like a clarion o'er the din and stress.
"I will replant the flag!" It is Larenne,
The courage of Lucretia in her face.
"Tyrants, assassins, know the hour is near
For our deliverance. Now shall the oppressed
Reckon with the oppressor. We can say
If liberty wrings forth the cry—"Spare none!"
Serfs we have been, down-trodden serfs, held long
In bondage by the hands that never spared.

'Tis past—the future shall avenge us all."
"Seize her and bind her tightly with the rope,
She will adorn the Bastille dungeon well;
Nay, kill her not!" She stands, each vein on fire,
Bold spirit that could never quail. A click
Of levelled muskets, then a cry above
The tumult of the conflict, "Spare my child!
She is all I have on earth. O God! my child!
But what are mothers' cries if blood must flow
For Liberty? "Be silent, or we fire!"
The roar of combat, ring of shots, and then
An instant's mighty stillness, awed and mute,
Insurgents and defenders stand before
That woman's challenge. "Seize me, bind me if
You will, cut me in pieces with the rope,
But let the poor have bread; give to the poor
Their freedom from your despots!" Furious oaths
Broke from the ruffians of the National Guard,
They launched themselves upon the barricades,
Bayonet flashed o'er her head, while musket shots
Flew past like hail. "Halt!" 'Tis the Comte
Vallaire.
"Deal with *me* as ye will, ye fiends of Hell,
But set this woman free. My death shall be
The ransom of her life!" Then from Larenne
Rang out a bitter cry the rope could ne'er
Have forced though it had rent her heart in twain,
"Spare him, I love this man, he shall not die."
"Ha! Ha! You quarrel for the stake, Ha! Ha!
He is a traitor to the King! Deal him
A traitor's due. Present and Fire!" A shot.
She strained at the cord. "In mercy, spare his life.
In justice, pity, see! I give you mine!"

Too late! dead at her feet he lay, his love
Crowned by the last sad sacrifice of all,
Then through the stillness burst one mighty cry;
They cut the cord that bound her—she was dead.

O Liberty! what dross amid the gold
Is cast in Freedom's name! but Love that mocks
At kings and rebels higher guerdon wins,
For Love is truest liberty, and death
A friend the world still keeps for faithfulness.

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BABY LOVERS

BY HARRIET KENDALL

"Kiss me Dollie," Bobbie said,
"For I love you." Red lips met
Like twin rosebuds that were wed
Ere the Summer sun had set.

"Bobbie I will marry you,
When you are a great big man,
If you are a soldier too
I will love you all I can."

Then a bird sang "do it! do it!" (tweet),
And the sunflowers glanced aside
As they kissed. The bird sang "Sweet!"
To the little promised bride.

Years have gone. The blue-eyed sprite
Is a woman. Bobbie too
A great big man, and he can fight,
As the great big soldiers do.

He is tall with manly brow,
He has fought in far-off lands,
"Dollie do you love me now?"
As he takes her trembling hands.

And the world is all aglow
As her sweet eyes answer "Yes;"
For the birds their story know,
And the stately sunflowers guess.

Faithful hearts these baby lovers,
Faithful still, as in the past,
Faithful till the green earth covers
Bobbie—Dollie, at the last.

[*From* Synariss (*Simpkin, Marshall & Co.*). *By Special Permission of the Author.*]

"ACCURSED"

BY HÉLÈNE VACARESCO, TRANSLATED BY CARMEN SYLVA AND ALMA STRETTELL

The heavens lower, and the ravens fly.
Are ye forerunners of the snow, dark birds?
And shall we soon have snow upon our fields?

It was not me he cursed, he cursed my house.
And when I leave the house, my soul hath rest;
But when I enter in again, the curse
Awaits me at my door.
Would I might sleep beneath the open sky!
But at the moonlight hour, One saith to me:
"Go back into thy house."
Nor can I answer: "Nay, a curse is on it."
It was not me he cursed,
He only cursed the bed whereon I sleep;
Would I might lie upon the ground to sleep!

But at the hour of sleep, One saith to me:
"Lie down upon thy bed."
It was not me he cursed, he only cursed
The food that was to nourish me,
The water that I drink.
Would I might die of hunger!
But at the hour of hunger and of thirst
There crieth One aloud within me, saying:
"Eat then and drink!"
It was not me he cursed;
He only cursed the paths I wander by;
Would I might stay my steps!
But at the hour of sunrise cometh One
And openeth wide my door and saith: "Go hence!"
It was not me he cursed,
Only my chain, my girdle and my spindle;
Would I need never touch them!
But then One saith: "Take up
Thy girdle and thy spindle and thy chain."
It was not me he cursed;
But only all I see and touch, and those
To whom I draw me near.
And I would fain see nothing more, nor touch
Nor draw me near to any.
And to the graves I go, that I may die;
Then from the graves One riseth and saith: "Live!"

The heavens lower, and the ravens fly.
Are ye forerunners of the snow, dark birds?
And will there soon be snow upon our fields?

[*From* The Bard of the Dimbovitza. *By Special Permission of Mrs. Harrison, and of the Publishers, Messrs. Harper & Brothers.*]

THE NECKLACE OF TEARS

BY HÉLÈNE VACARESCO, TRANSLATED BY CARMEN SYLVA AND ALMA STRETTELL

The Luteplayer sang before my cottage door;
I hearkened to his lay and said "Sing on!"
But the Cobzar, he only knows one song.

THE little maid was fain to make herself
A necklace fine,
As silv'ry as the moonlight's silver glance,
Or as the river when the moonbeams shine.

And so she asked the river: "Speak, wilt thou
Give me thy waves that in the moonlight dance?"
And then she went and asked the moon: "Wilt thou
Give me thy glance?"

"Not so," the moon replied, "because the night
My glance doth need."
"Not so," the river answered her, "for I
Must keep my waters for the thirsty mead."

The little maid was fain to make herself
A necklace fine;
Then said the sons of men: "Come, take our tears
To fashion this bright silver chain of thine."

Then each one gave her his most precious tears,
And glad were they
To deck the maiden's throat; and all the tears
Thus whispered low together and did say:

"Whence art thou, sister, from what heart dost come?"
Then each one told the grief that did befall
Her parent heart, and each one thought herself
Saddest of all.

So now the maiden had her necklace bright,
More silvery than yonder river's wave,
Or glance of moonlight, yet when she put on
That necklace brave,

The tears all told her whence they came, and grew
So heavy, that beneath the burden sore
The maiden died, and on her grave that chain
Weighs evermore.

The Luteplayer sang without my cottage door
I hearkened to his lay and said: "Sing on!"
But the Cobzar, he knows one only song.

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THE BRIDGE OF THE HUNDRED SPANS

BY SIR GILBERT PARKER

It was the days when the cattle come
Back from their winter wand'rings home;
When the sun with a million levers lifts
Abodes of snow from the rocky rifts;
When the line-man's eyes like the lynx's, scans
The lofty bridge of the Hundred Spans.
Round a curve, down a sharp incline,
If the red-eyed lantern made no sign,
Swept the train, and upon the bridge
That binds a canyon from ridge to ridge:
"Watch now, mind you; neglect will stay
An unwashed crime till your dying day:
Watch then, mind you," Van Horne had said,
"Mountain, bridge, and the long snow-shed,

Your altar, the Bridge of the Hundred Spans,
And you, priests, acolytes, sacristans."

Never a watchman like old Carew;
Knew his duty and did it, too;
"Right as rain," said the engineers,
"With the old man working his eyes and ears."

"Safe with Carew on the mountain wall,"
Was how they put it, in Montreal.
Right and safe was it East and West
Till a demon rose on the mountain crest,
And drove at its shoulders angry spears,
That it rose from its sleep of a thousand years,
That its heaving breast broke free the cords
Of imprisoned snow as with flaming swords;
And like a star from its frozen height,
An avalanche leaped one spring-tide night;
Leaped with a power not God's or man's,
To smite the Bridge of the Hundred Spans.

It smote two scores of the spans; it slew
With its icy squadrons old Carew.
Asleep he lay in his snow-bound grave,
While the train drew on that he could not save;
It would drop doom-deep through the trap of death
From the light above, to the dark beneath.

One more hap in a hapless world,
One more wreck where the tide is swirled,
One more heap in a waste of sand,
One more clasp of a palsied hand;
The ceaseless falling, the countless groan,
The waft of a leaf and the fall of a stone;
Ever and ever the useless prayer,
Beating the walls of a mute despair.

Doom, all doom, nay then—*not* all doom!
Rises a hope from the fast closed tomb:
Write not "Lost" with its grinding bans,
On life, or the Bridge of the Hundred Spans.

See! on the canyon's western ridge,
There stands a girl! She beholds the bridge
Smitten and broken; she sees the need
For a warning swift and a daring deed.
See then the act of a simple girl,
Learn from it, thinker, and priest, and churl.
See her, the lantern between her teeth,
Crossing the quivering trap of death!
Hand over hand on a swaying rail,
Sharp in her ears and her heart the wail
Of a hundred lives; and she has no fear,
Save that her prayer be not granted her.
Cold is the snow on the rail, and chill
The wind that comes from the frozen hill.
Her hair blows free and her eyes are full
Of the look that makes heaven merciful—
Merciful, God! Quick, shut your eyes,
Lest you wish to see how a brave girl dies!
Dies!—Not yet: for her firm hands clasped
The solid bridge, as the breach out-gasped,
And the rail that held her downward swept
Where old Carew in his snow-grave slept.

Now up and over the steep incline,
She speeds with the red light for a sign;
She hears the cry of the coming train—
It trembles like lance-heads through her brain;
And round the curve, with a foot as fleet
As a sinner's that flees from the Judgment seat,

She flies; and the signal swings, and then
She knows no more; but the engine-men
Lifted her, bore her, where women brought
The flush to her cheeks, and with kisses caught
The warm breath back to her pallid lips,
The life from lives that were near eclipse;
Blessed her, and praised her, and begged her name,
That all of her kindred should know her fame;
Should do her honour and hold her dear
As a saint in a chapel's atmosphere;
Should tell how a girl from a cattle ranch
That night defeated an avalanche.

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MY SWEETHEART

BY SAMUEL MINTURN PECK

HER height? Perhaps you'd deem her tall—
  To be exact, just five feet seven,
Her arching feet are not too small;
  Her gleaming eyes are bits of heaven.
Slim are her hands, yet not too wee—
  I could not fancy useless fingers;
Her hands are all that hands should be,
  And own a touch whose memory lingers.

The hue that lights her oval cheeks
  Recalls the pink that tints a cherry.
Upon her chin a dimple speaks
  A disposition blithe and merry,
Her laughter ripples like a brook;
  Its sound a heart of stone would soften.
Though sweetness shines in every look,
  Her laugh is never loud nor often.

Though golden locks have won renown
  With bards, I never heed her raving;
The girl I love hath locks of brown,
  Not tightly curled, but gently waving.
Her mouth?—perhaps you'd term it large—
  Is firmly moulded, full and curving;
Her quiet lips are Cupid's charge,
  But in the cause of truth unswerving.

Though little of her neck is seen,
  That little is both smooth and sightly,
And fair as marble is its sheen
  Above her bodice gleaming whitely.
Her nose is just the proper size,
  Without a trace of upward turning.
Her shell-like ears are wee and wise,
  The tongue of scandal ever spurning.

In mirth and woe her voice is low,
  Her calm demeanour never fluttered;
Her every accent seems to go
  Straight to one's heart as soon as uttered.
She ne'er coquets as others do;
  Her tender heart would never let her.
Where does she dwell? I would I knew!
  As yet, alas! I've never met her.

BILLY, HE'S IN TROUBLE

I'VE got a letter, parson, from my son away out West,
An' my ol' heart's as heavy as an anvil in my breast,
To think the boy whose futur' I had once so proudly planned
Should wander from the path o' right an' come to such an end!

I told him when he left us, only three short years ago,
He'd find himself a-ploughin' in a mighty crooked row—
He'd miss his father's counsels, and his mother's prayers, too,
But he said the farm was hateful, an' he guessed he'd have to go.

I know thar's big temptation for a youngster in the West,
But I believed our Billy had the courage to resist,
An' when he left I warned him o' the ever-waitin' snares
That lie like hidden sarpints in life's pathway everywheres.
But Bill, he promised faithful to be keerful, an' allowed
He'd build a reputation that'd make us mighty proud.
But it seems as how my counsel sort o' faded from his mind,
An' now the boy's in trouble of the very wustest kind!

His letters come so seldom that I somehow sort o' knowed
That Billy was a-tramping on a mighty rocky road.
But never once imagined he would bow my head in shame,
An' in the dust would waller his ol' daddy's honoured name.
He writes from out in Denver, an' the story's mighty short;
I just can't tell his mother; it'd crush her poor ol' heart!
An' so I reckoned, parson, you might break the news to her—
Bill's in the legislatur', but he doesn't say what fur.

GRANDMOTHER GRAY

BY MARY KEELEY BOUTELLE

FADED and fair, in an old arm-chair,
Sunset gilding her thin white hair,
Silently knitting, sits Grandmother Gray:
While I on my elbows beside her lean,
And tell what wonderful things I mean
To have, and to do, if I can, some day;
You can talk so to Grandmother Gray—
She doesn't laugh, nor send you away.

I see as I look from the window seat,
A house over yonder, across the street,
  With a fine French roof and a frescoed hall;
The deep bay windows are full of flowers;
They've a clock of bronze that chimes the hours,
  And a fountain—I hear it tinkle and fall
When the doors are open: "I mean," I say,
"To live in a house like that some day."
"Money will buy it," says Grandmother Gray.

"There's a low barouche, all green and gold,
  And a pair of horses as black as jet,
I've seen drive by—and before I'm old
  A turnout like that I hope to get.
How they prance and shine in their harness gay!
What fun 'twould be if they ran away!"
"Money will buy it," says Grandmother Gray.

"To-morrow, I know, a great ship sails
  Out of port and across the sea;
Oh, to feel in my face the ocean gales,
  And the salt waves dancing under me!
In the fair old lands of legend and lay

I long to roam—and I shall, some day."
"Money will do it," says Grandmother Gray:

"And when you are old, like me," says she,
"And getting and going are done with, dear,
What then do you think the one thing will be
You will wish and need to content you here?"
"Love, you see, will content me," I say,
"That money won't buy," says Grandmother Gray.

MAGDALENA

"The night is dreary and cold,
But the winds are mad with glee;
And the Storm-king, wild, and cruel, and bold
To-night holds jubilee.
Patter, pitiless rain,
From the clouds with passion gray;
Toll! mad winds, toll! for my lost soul
Is passing from earth away.

"O blackest of nights! to you
All other nights are day;
For the sable wings of a hellish crew
Have shut all light away.
Leave me alone with death;
Dark spirits of sea and sky,
Ye goblin things, with sable wings,
I do not fear to die!

"Wasted, and haggard, and old;
Old, and haggard, and thin;
Wasted and haggard with suffering untold;
Old and haggard with sin.

Steeped in crime to the lips;
With sorrow and anguish gray.
Toll, mad winds, toll, a human soul
Is passing from earth away.

"Hark to the old church-bell
That swings in the church-tower gray;
O'er meadow and hill, o'er dell and stream,
Its music calls away;—
Away from carking care,
Away from strife and sin;
Come, come away, 'tis His own day,—
To His courts enter in.

"Brightly the sunlight gleams;
Softly the sweet airs blow;
Mid verdant hills the happy streams
With tuneful babblings flow.
We pass the churchyard wall,
Mother, Effie, and I,
And the green grass waves o'er lowly graves,
And the trailing willows sigh.

"Hark! that is his step, I know;
Ah, no! it has passed me by;
Ah! white, cold moon, you are like the snow,
I shrink from your searching eye.
But you cannot know his love;
His kisses are not for you;
I pity you so, with your heart of snow,
On your throne in the starry blue.

"Where am I? O God! it is past,—
The dream of guileless years;

Howl, fiends of night, on the whirling blast,
  And mock these idiot tears.
I will not fear to die,
  Though all beyond is gloom!
Toll! mad winds, toll! for my lost soul
  Is passing unto doom."

Wasted, and haggard, and old;
  Old, and haggard, and thin;
She's sleeping to-night 'neath the churchyard mould,
  Crushed 'neath a weight of sin.
Not hers the deadly guilt;
  Hers only the love and shame,—
Only the pang of a deathless love,
  Only a blighted name.

Alone in the black midnight,
  Haunted by goblin and ghoul;
The mad winds tolled, death's billows rolled
  Across her shuddering soul.

THE OLD CLOCK

BY GUY CARLETON

The old clock croons on the sun-kissed wall,
The merry seconds to minutes call;
  Tick, tock! 'Tis morn!

A maiden sits at the mirror there,
And smiles as she braids her golden hair;
Oh, in the light but her face is fair!

Far over the sea the good ship brings
The lover of whom the maiden sings;
From the orange tree the first leaf springs;
Tick, tock! tick, tock!

The old clock laughs on the flower-decked wall,
The rose-winged hours elude their thrall;
Tick, tock! 'Tis noon!

The lover's pride and his love are blest;
The maiden is folded to his breast;
On her brow the holy blossoms rest.

Oh, thrice, thrice long may the sweet bells chime
As echoing this through future time!
Still to my heart beats that measured rhyme—
Tick, tock! tick, tock!

The old clock moans on the crumbling wall
The dear years into eternity fall;
Tick, tock! 'Tis night!

The thread that yon spider draws with care
Across the gleam of the mirror there
Seems like the ghost of a golden hair.

The sweet bells chime for those who may wed;
The neroli-snow crowns many a head—
But tree and maiden and lover are dead.
Tick, tock! tick, tock!

PICTURE OF THE LAST SUPPER

BY LOUISE E. V. BOYD

"At last 'tis finished!" cried the Spanish painter,
Gazing on the canvas where was wrought,
The last sad supper of our blessed Saviour,
An incarnation of his pious thought.

The chosen twelve sat there a-near the Master—
  The artist might have thought each looker-on
Would feel his heart's depths wildly stirred at seeing
  That look of Peter, and that smile of John.

He might have feared the critic, there beholding
  Such rays of radiant light, such depths of gloom,
Would, mad with envy, all condemn, consigning
  Picture and painter to oblivious tomb.

But no! as one entranced, the artist only
  Gazed, wondering, in the face of Christ, to see
How his unwearied, prayerful toil had clothed it
  In holy calm, in peerless majesty.

There was the love that blest the little children;
  The pity there, that made the blind to see,
That healed the sick, and, weeping with the sisters,
  Called from the grave, the dead, at Bethany.

The smile was sweet with every gospel promise;
  Rest for the weary, freedom for the slave
Could there be read, and over all the triumph
  The consciousness of resurrection gave.

While yet, with tearful joy, the artist pondered
  The spirit-meaning in that face divine,
One entered, crying out, "The art is perfect
  That pictured yonder sparkling cup of wine!"

Over the humbled artist's face a shadow
  Fell suddenly. "Ah! can it be?" he said,
"The Master's hallowed brow, and look benignant
  Are nothing, trifles winning praise instead?"

Then rushing to his brush, he seized it, dashed it
  Over what had been marvellously fair;
Upon the canvas now was only ruin,
  And in the artist's heart alone despair.

TANTALUS: TEXAS

BY JOAQUIN MILLER

The Llano Estacado, or Staked Plain (so called from the means taken by the Mexicans to mark a track for travellers), is a large table-land to the west of the State of Texas, and is without a stream in its extent.

"If I may trust your love," she cried,
"And you would have me for a bride,
Ride over yonder plain, and bring
Your flask full from the Mustang spring;
Fly, fast as western eagle's wing,
O'er the Llano Estacado!"

He heard, and bowed without a word,
His gallant steed he lightly spurred;
He turned his face, and rode away
Towards the grave of dying day,
And vanished with its parting ray
On the Llano Estacado.

Night came, and found him riding on,
Day came, and still he rode alone.
He spared not spur, he drew not rein,
Across that broad, unchanging plain,
Till he the Mustang spring might gain,
On the Llano Estacado.

A little rest, a little draught,
Hot from his hand, and quickly quaffed,
His flask was filled, and then he turned.
Once more his steed the maguey spurned
Once more the sky above him burned
On the Llano Estacado.

How hot the quivering landscape glowed!
His brain seemed boiling as he rode,—
Was it a dream, a drunken one,

Or was he really riding on?
Was that a skull that gleamed and shone
On the Llano Estacado?

"Brave steed of mine, brave steed!" he cried
So often true, so often tried,
Bear up a little longer yet!"
His mouth was black with blood and sweat—
Heaven! how he longed his lips to wet!
On the Llano Estacado.

And still, within his breast, he held
The precious flask so lately filled.
Oh, for a drink! But well he knew
If empty it should meet her view,
Her scorn—— But still his longing grew
On the Llano Estacado.

His horse went down. He wandered on,
Giddy, blind, beaten, and alone.
While upon cushioned couch you lie,
Oh, think how hard it is to die,
Beneath the cruel, unclouded sky,
On the Llano Estacado.

At last he staggered, stumbled, fell,
His day was done, he knew full well.
And raising to his lips the flask,
The end, the object of his task,
Drank to her,—more she could not ask.
Ah! the Llano Estacado!

That night in the Presidio,
Beneath the torchlights' wavy glow,
She danced—and never thought of him,
The victim of a woman's whim,
Lying with face upturned and grim,
On the Llano Estacado.

LITTLE GRETCHEN

THROUGH a window, old and broken,
Came the moonlight like a token,—
Like a token pure and holy,
From the happy world above;—
Just within the shadow lying,
There a little child lay dying,
All alone lay moaning, crying,
With no one to help or love.

True, the streets were full of people,
And the shadow of a steeple,
Of a steeple, grand and stately,
Almost fell upon the floor.
Yet within was want and sorrow,
No glad thoughts for hope's to-morrow,
Only fearing lest a footfall,
Should come through the open door;

Lest a footstep, drunken, reeling,
Should come through the darkness stealing,
And with brutal hand uplifted,
Drive her out into the town;—
Where all day with voice that trembled,
She had sung, where crowds assembled,
Asking only for a penny,
As she wandered up and down.

But when night came, weak and weary,
To the attic, dark and dreary,
To a cruel master's chiding,
Came the little faltering feet;
And the tired child lay sobbing,
Mingled with her heart's wild throbbing,

As she listened to the coming,
For his coming from the street;

Till the moonlight growing brighter,
Made the dark room, clearer, lighter,
And a gentler voice seemed calling,
Till she followed where it lead.

* * * *

Through the window, old and broken,
Came the moonlight, like a token,
Like a peaceful benediction,
On the pale face of the dead.

THE ROSARY OF MY YEARS

BY FATHER RYAN

Some reckon their ages by years,
Some measure their life by art—
But some tell their days by the flow of their tears,
And their life by the moans of their heart.

The dials of earth may show
The length, not the depth of years,
Few or many they come, few or many they go—
But our time is best measured by fears.

Ah! not by the silver gray
That creeps through the sunny hair,
And not by the scenes that we pass on our way—
And not by the furrows the finger of care

On the forehead and face have made—
Not so do we count our years;
Not by the sun of the earth, but the shade
Of our souls—and the fall of our tears.

For the young are ofttimes old,
Though their brow be bright and fair;
While their blood beats warm their heart lies cold—
O'er them the spring-time, but winter is there.

And the old are ofttimes young
When their hair is thin and white,
And they sing in age as in youth they sung,
And they laugh, for their cross was light.

But bead by bead I tell
The rosary of my years;
From a cross to a cross they lead—'tis well!
And they're blessed with a blessing of tears.

Better a day of strife
Than a century of sleep;
Give me instead of a long stream of life,
The tempest and tears of the deep.

A thousand joys may foam
On the billows of all the years;
But never the foam brings the brave bark home;
It reaches the haven through tears.

A CONTRAST

BY ELEANOR C. DONNELLY

At her easel, brush in hand,
Clad in silk attire,
Painting "sunsets" vague and grand,
(Clumsy clouds of fire!)—
Flaxen hair in shining sheaves;
Pink and pearly skin;
Fingers, which, like lily-leaves,
Neither toil nor spin;

At her belt a sunflower bound,
  Daisies on the table,
Plaques and panels all around—
  That's æsthetic Mabel!

In the kitchen, fork in hand,
  Clad in coarse attire,
Dishing oysters, fried and panned,
  From a blazing fire;
Dusty hair in frowsy knots;
  Worn and withered skin;
Fingers, brown and hard as nuts,
  When the frosts begin;
Baking-board, one side, aground;
  Wash-tub on the other;
Pots and skillets all around—
  That is Mabel's mother!

GRANDMA'S SHAMROCKS

BY E. A. SUTTON

"HERE gran'ma, here's a present, it has come a distance, too,
'Tis a little pot of shamrocks, and it comes addressed [to you!
Yes, all the way from Ireland, and the card here mentions more,—
They were gathered at your birthplace on the banks of Avonmore."

"From Ireland! do you tell me? O darling, is it true?
Acushla, let me feel them—and you say 'twas there they grew?
Why, I can scarce believe it; is it really what you say?
From my birthplace in old Ireland! poor old Ireland far away.

"I'm old and stiff and feeble, and in darkness, God be praised,
Yet, Kittie, how it stirs me, how my poor old heart is raised,
To feel it here so near me, the soil that gave me birth,
The very clay of Ireland,—let me kiss the holy earth.

"These blessed little shamrocks! I can't see them, yet I know
They bring me back the eyesight of the happy long ago,
And rushing thro' the darkness comes the picture that I love,
The dear green fields of Ireland and the sunny sky above.

"I see, as once I saw them, when a girl like you I stood
Amid the furze and heather—there's the chapel, hill and wood;
There's the abbey clad with ivy, and the river's winding shore,
And the boys and girls all playing on the banks of Avonmore.

"God bless the little shamrocks, then, for calling back the scene,
The beauty of the sunshine, the brightness of the green.
Thro' long, long years to see it, and to see it all so plain.
Ah! child, I'm sure you're smiling, but I'm feeling young again.

"And, though I'm truly thankful for the blessing that God's hand
Has brought around me, Kittie, in this great and happy land,
I can't forget the old home, midst the comforts of the new;
My heart is three parts buried where these little shamrocks grew."

MILLAIS'S "HUGUENOTS"

[*To H—— (playing one of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte.")*]

[It is the eve of St. Bartholomew's massacre (August 15, 1572). On the morrow, by order of the Duc de Guise, every Catholic must bind a strip of white linen round his arm, when the bell of the Palais de Justice should give the signal for the massacre, that the destroyers might know them from the Protestants, who are to be slain. The Huguenot of the picture refuses to permit his Roman Catholic sweetheart to bind the badge around his arm, though she pleads with all the strength of her love. The pathetic story is told in the following poem:]

A FAVOURITE picture rises up before me,
  Whene'er you play that tune;
I see two figures standing in a garden,
  In the still August noon.

One is a girl's, with pleading face turned upward,
  Wild with a great alarm;
Trembling with haste, she binds her 'broidered kerckief,
  About the other's arm.

Whose face is bent on her with tender pity,
  Whose eyes look into hers
With a deep meaning, though she cannot read it,
  Hers are so dim with tears.

What are they saying in the sunny garden,
  With summer flowers ablow?
What gives the woman's voice its passionate pleading?
  What makes the man's so low?

She murmurs, "See, love, you shall wear my 'kerchief?
  It is the badge of life;
And it shall bear you safely through the morrow,
  Ay, through the deadly strife.

"You will not wear it? Will not wear my 'kerchief?
  Nay! Do not tell me why!

I will not listen! If you go without it,
  You will go hence to die.

"Hush! Do not answer; it is death, I tell you!
  Indeed I speak the truth;
You, standing there so warm with life and vigour,
  So bright with health and youth,

"You would go hence, out of the glowing sunshine,
  Out of the garden's bloom,
Out of the thinking, feeling, living present,
  Into the unknown gloom!

"I cannot bear it!" "Hush, oh! hush, my darling!
  Life is so sweet to me,
So full of hope, you need not bid me guard it,
  If such a thing might be!

"If such a thing might be! But not through falsehood,
  I could not come to you;
I would not stand here in your pure, sweet presence,
  Knowing myself untrue."

"It is no sin! It is no sin, I tell you!
  This is no open strife;
Have you not often dreamt a nobler warfare,
  In which to spend your life?

"Oh! for my sake—though but for my sake wear it!
  Think what my life would be
If you, who gave it first true worth and meaning,
  Were taken now from me!

"Think of the long, long days so slowly passing!
  Think of the endless years!
I am so young! Must I live out my lifetime
  With neither hopes nor fears?"

"Should our love make us only true and tender,
Unmeet for needful strife?
Should it not make us braver—aye, and stronger,
Either for death or life?

"And life is harder. O my love! my treasure!
If I could bear your part
Of this great sorrow, I would go to meet it
With an unshrinking heart.

"Child! Child! I little dreamt, in that bright summer,
When first your love I sought,
Of all the future store of woe and anguish
Which I, unknowing, wrought.

"But you'll forgive me? Yes, you will forgive me,
I know, when I am dead.
I would have loved you with a life's devotion—
God love you now, instead!"

"Forgive me, dear one; life will lose its beauty
When human love is gone.
I bid thee go! When duty's voice is heeded
God leaves us not alone."

THE OLD WIFE

BY THERON BROWN

By the bed the old man, waiting, sat in vigil sad and tender,
Where his aged wife lay dying; and the twilight shadows brown
Slowly from the wall and window chased the sunset's golden splendour
Going down.

"Is it night?" she whispered, waking (for her spirit seemed to hover
Lost between the next world's sunrise and the bedtime cares of this),
And the old man, weak and tearful, trembling as he bent above her,
Answered: "Yes."

"Are the children in?" she asked him. Could he tell her? All the treasures
Of their household lay in silence many years beneath the snow;
But her heart was with them living, back among her toils and pleasures
Long ago.

And again she called at dew-fall, in the sweet old summer weather.
"Where is little Charley, father? Frank and Robert—have they come?"
"They are safe," the old man faltered—"all the children are together,
Safe at home."

Then he murmured gentle soothings, but his grief grew strong and stronger,
Till it choked and stilled him as he held and kissed her wrinkled hand,
For her soul, far out of hearing, could his fondest words no longer
Understand.

Still the pale lips stammered questions, lullabies and broken verses,
Nursery prattle all her language of a mother's loving heeds,

While the midnight round the mourner, left to sorrow's bitter mercies,
Wrapped its weeds.
There was stillness on the pillow—and the old man listened lonely—
Till they led him from the chamber, with the burden on his breast,
For the wife of seventy years, his manhood's early love and only,
Lay at rest.
"Fare-you-well," he sobbed, "my Sarah; you will meet the babes before me;
'Tis a little while, for neither can the parting long abide,
And you'll come and call me soon, I know—and Heaven will restore me
To your side."

* * * *

It was even so. The springtime in the steps of winter treading,
Scarcely shed its orchard blossoms ere the old man closed his eyes,
And they buried him by Sarah—and they had their "diamond wedding"
In the skies.

THE SIOUX CHIEF'S DAUGHTER

BY JOAQUIN MILLER

Two gray hawks ride the rising blast;
Dark cloven clouds drive to and fro
By peaks pre-eminent in snow;
A sounding river rushes past,

So wild, so vortex-like, and vast.
A lone lodge tops the windy hill;
A tawny maiden, mute and still,
Stands waiting at the river's brink,
As weird and wild as you can think.

A mighty chief is at her feet;
She does not heed him wooing so—
She hears the dark, wild waters flow;
She waits her lover, tall and fleet,
From far gold fields of Idaho,
Beyond the beaming hills of snow.

He comes! The grim chief springs in air—
His brawny arm, his blade is bare.
She turns; she lifts her round, dark hand;
She looks him fairly in the face;
She moves her foot a little pace
And says, with coldness and command,
"There's blood enough in this lorn land.
But see! a test of strength and skill,
Of courage and fierce fortitude;
To breast and wrestle with the rude
And storm-born waters, now I will
Bestow you both. . . . Stand either side!
Take you my left, tall Idaho;
And you, my burly chief, I know
Would choose my right. Now peer you low
Across the waters wild and wide.
See! leaning so this morn, I spied
Red berries dip yon farther side.
See, dipping, dripping in the stream,
Twin boughs of autumn berries gleam!

"Now, this, brave men, shall be the test:
Plunge in the stream, bear knife in teeth
To cut yon bough for bridal wreath.
Plunge in! and he who bears him best,
And brings yon ruddy fruit to land
The first, shall have both heart and hand."

Then one threw robes with sullen air,
And wound red fox tails in his hair.
But one with face of proud delight
Entwined a crest of snowy white.

She sudden gave
The sign, and each impatient brave
Shot sudden in the sounding wave;
The startled waters gurgled round,
Their stubborn strokes kept sullen sound.
Now side by side the rivals plied,
Yet no man wasted word or breath;
All was as still as stream of death.
Now side by side their strength was tried,
They near the shore at last; and now
The foam flies spouting from a face
That laughing lifts from out the race.

The race is won, the work is done!
She sees the climbing crest of snow;
She knows her tall, brown Idaho.
She cries aloud, she laughing cries,
And tears are streaming from her eyes:
"O splendid, kingly Idaho,
I kiss his lifted crest of snow;
I see him clutch the bended bough!
'Tis cleft—he turns! is coming now
My tall and tawny king, come back!

Come swift, O sweet! Why falter so?
Come! Come! What thing has crossed your track!
I kneel to all the gods I know.
O come, my manly Idaho!
Great Spirit, what is this I dread?
Why, there is blood! the wave is red!
That wrinkled chief, outstripped in race,
Dives down, and, hiding from my face,
Strikes underneath! . . . He rises now!
Now plucks my hero's berry bough,
And lifts aloft his red fox head,
And signals he has won for me. . . .
Hist! Softly! Let him come and see.

"O come! my white crowned hero, come!
O come! and I will be your bride,
Despite yon chieftain's craft and might.
Come back to me! my lips are dumb,
My hands are helpless with despair:
The hair you kissed, my long, strong hair,
Is reaching to the ruddy tide,
That you may clutch it when you come.

"How slow he buffets back the wave!
O God, he sinks! O heaven! save
My brave, brave boy. He rises! See!
Hold fast, my boy! Strike! strike for me!
Strike straight this way! Strike firm and strong!
Hold fast your strength. It is not long—
O God, he sinks! He sinks! Is gone!
His face has perished from my sight!

"And did I dream, and do I wake?
Or did I wake and now but dream?
And what is this crawls from the stream?
O here is some mad, mad, mistake!
What you! The red fox at my feet?
You first, and failing from a race?
What you have brought me berries red?
What! You have brought your bride a wreath?
You sly red fox with wrinkled face—
That blade has blood, between your teeth!

"Lie still! lie still! till I lean o'er
And clutch your red blade to the shore. . . .
Ha! Ha! Take that! and that! and that!
Ha! Ha! So, through your coward throat
The full day shines! . . . Two fox tails float
And drift and drive adown the stream.

"But what is this? What snowy crest
Climbs out the willows of the west,
All weary, wounded, bent, and slow,
And dripping from his streaming hair?
It is! it is my Idaho!
His feet are on the land, and fair
His face is lifting to my face,
For who shall now dispute the race?

"The gray hawks pass, O love! two doves
O'er yonder lodge shall coo their loves.
My love shall heal your wounded breast,
And in yon tall lodge two shall rest."

ERE THE SUN WENT DOWN

BY GEORGE WEATHERLY

MAD ?
Oh, no, not mad !
Only sad
With a lifetime's grief
Wrought in a day !
No hope, no ray
Of glad relief
To break the gloom,
Save in the tomb !

Bad words, you say,
While yet are given
Young life and health
And hope of heaven.
Yes ! yes ! you're right ;
There is my wealth
My guiding light,—
The hope of heaven ;
For 'tis my all,
My very all !

Hark ! hark ! be still !
Did you hear a call ?
Methought 'twas Will
Speaking to me
Across the sea !
Fancy ? May be !
Yet ever and aye,
Just as to-day,
When winds blow shrill,
I seem to hear
My Will, my Will,

And loud and clear,
"God bless you, dear,"
Rings out once more
Above the roar
Of wind and sea.
"God bless you, dear;
Keep you for me!"

'Twas the morn before
Our wedding day,
And with a smile
I stood awhile
In the market-way,
And counted o'er
My little store
Of gold, and thought
What I should buy
For him, my king;
But as I sought
Fit gift to find,—
A gem, a ring,—
He crept behind
In his dear way
And kissed me there,
And oh, the day
Was fair, so fair!

That day the wind
Blew loud and long,
And the cruel sea
Raged furiously;
And mid a throng
Upon the quay—

Faces spray-sprent,
Listening intent
To the signal gun—
I found my dear,
My own dear one,
A volunteer
With the life-boat men!
And I cried out then;
"You *shall* not go!
Your life you owe
To me alone!
'Tis not your own!
You *shall* not go!"

But, with a sigh,
He put me by
And said, "Dear love,
To One above
I owe my life,
My promised wife,
My joy, my all;
And at His call
I needs must go!"

Then in my woe
And rage and pride,
I madly cried—
"Go, then, for good;
Good-by for aye!"
And as I stood
Raging away
With gibe and scoff,
The boat went off!

Yet, praised be God!

I still could hear
Above the sea:
"God bless you, dear;
Keep you for me!"

And hours passed by,
And the sun went down,
The sun went down,
And the waves beat high,
And the angry sky
Was black, so black!
But the boat, the boat,
It never—came—back!

GOBLIN MARKET*

BY CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

MORNING and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry
"Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries
Apricots, strawberries;—
All ripe together

* Only part of the poem is here printed.

In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy;
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try;
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-firs-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy."

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes;
Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
"Lie close," Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head;
"We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what soil they fed
Their hungry thirsty roots?"
"Come buy," call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.

"Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men."
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook;
"Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes."
"No," said Lizzie: "No, no, no;
Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us."
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.
One had a cat's face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat's pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves.
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,
Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch.
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
"Come buy, come buy,"
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother;
Signalling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One heaved the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
"Come buy, come buy," was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money:
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,
The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-paced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was
heard;

One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried "Pretty Goblin" still for "Pretty
Polly;"—
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste
"Good Folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather."
"You have much gold upon your head,"
They answered all together:
"Buy from us with a golden curl."
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the
more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
She sucked until her lips were sore;
Then flung the emptied rinds away
But gathered up one kernel-stone,
And knew not was it night or day
As she turned home alone.

THREE KISSES

BY CLEMENT SCOTT

An angel, with three lilies in her hand,
  Came winging to the earth from Paradise;
They changed to kisses ere she reached love's land,
  And fell upon the brow, the lips, the eyes.

First was the kiss of purity and peace—
  Lonely they sat together by the fire—
To him from sorrow came a dear release,
  To her the shadow of a dim desire.
Two aimless souls had ceased their wandering,
  Two fettered spirits struggled to be free;
To sweet love's garden came the blossoming,
  The tender leaf unfolded on Love's tree,
                The Kiss of Sanctity!

Next was the kiss of soul bound into soul—
  They stood at night beneath a ruined tower—
Dimly they heard the waves eternal roll
  Life was embodied in a single hour!
The one strong moment in a love divine,
  The Present shadowing Futurity;
No fate, no time, no terror could combine
  To rob that silence of its ecstasy—
                The Kiss of Unity!

Last came the kiss of dear love perfected,
  Sad in the chamber of the thing called Death!
Two tapers at the feet, two at the head,
  The murmur'd prayer, the low half-sobbing breath.
But brighter yet in distance far away,
  A gathered army of the souls that live;
The golden dawn of a transcendent day,
  When angels of the lilies come to give
                The Kiss—Eternity!

THE GARDEN OF SLEEP

BY CLEMENT SCOTT

On the grass of the cliff, at the edge of the steep,
God planted a garden—a garden of sleep!
'Neath the blue of the sky, in the green of the corn,
It is there that the regal, red poppies are born!
Brief days of desire, and long dreams of delight,
They are mine when my Poppy-Land cometh in sight,
In music of distance, with eyes that are wet,
It is there I remember, and there I forget!
O heart of my heart! where the poppies are born,
I am waiting for thee, in the hush of the corn.

Sleep! Sleep!
From the cliff to the Deep!
Sleep, my Poppy-Land,
Sleep!

In my garden of sleep, where red poppies are spread,
I wait for the living, alone with the dead!
For a tower in ruins stands guard o'er the deep,
At whose feet are green graves of dear women asleep!
Did they love as I love, when they lived by the sea?
Did they wait as I wait for the days that may be?
Was it hope or fulfilling that entered each breast,
Ere death gave release, and the poppies gave rest?
O life of my life! on the cliffs by the sea,
By the graves in the grass, I am waiting for thee!

Sleep! Sleep!
In the dews by the Deep!
Sleep, my Poppy-Land!
Sleep!

RUY BLAS

BY VICTOR HUGO

(Translated by Clement Scott)

(Act II. Scene II)

THE QUEEN *alone.*

How can I pray? How can I put to flight
The thought that haunts me? I am left alone!
A soul extinguished in a night of gloom.
I see his bleeding hand-prints on the wall;
He's wounded! God! why do so much for me?
Why scale the wall, and dare its giddy height?
Why bring me flow'rs? sweet truants from these eyes?
Why for so little risk a life so dear?
Those cruel spikes—they tore and wounded him.
A scrap of lace hung captive. Shed for me,
His blood were worth a sacrifice of tears!
When day by day I seek his gift of flow'rs,
I promise God I will return no more;
But having promised, still I wander back!
Three days have passed, and he is absent still
Wounded! Who art thou? fair but unknown man?
Who saw me lone and separate from love;
And without murmur, destitute of hope,
Scorning all danger—risked thy life for me!
Why shed thy blood? why risk thy lovely life
To cull one flower for the Queen of Spain?
Be whom thou wilt! sweet shadow on my path,
Since all my heart is captive to thy will,
Loved by thy mother—be thou blest by me!
[*She puts her hand to her heart:*
His letter burns my breast! [*Dreams again:*
That hated one!

Don Salluste! Fate can ruin or protect.
An angel smiles, a demon beckons me:
I dream a living nightmare—of two men
Who lead me on to some dark destiny,
A man who hates, a man who fondly loves:
Which will prevail at last? I cannot tell;
My fate is shipwrecked by opposing winds.
A woman may be weak—and still a Queen!
O! let me pray.

[*She kneels before the Madonna's shrine.*

Sweet Mother! help your child:
I dare not raise my eyes to thee! [*Pauses.*
Ah God!
The lace, the flow'rs, the letter, torture me!

[*She puts her hand to her breast and tears out a crumpled letter, a dried bouquet of small blue flowers, and a scrap of lace stained with blood. She throws them on a table, then falls again to her knees.*

Star of the Sea! Sweet Virgin! Martyr's Hope!
Help me! [*Pauses.*
The letter! [*Turning to the table.*
It has conquered me!
[*Kneels again.*
I will not read it. Queen! of all our joys,
Mother and Lover of afflicted souls,
I ask thy aid.

[*She rises from her knees, makes a few steps towards the table, then stops, then seems to yield to the irresistible fascination of the letter.*

Yes! I'll re-read it once,

One last, long time! Then it shall be destroyed.

[*She smiles sadly.*

One month ago! Alas! I said the same.

[*Opens the letter, resolutely, and reads.*

"My Lady! 'Neath thy feet a shadow falls,
"A man who loves thee! veiled in night obscure;
"A man who weeps, when gazing on a star!
"A man who, when thou shinest, dies below!
"Who, didst thou ask, would yield his soul to thee."

[*She places the letter on the table.*

A thirsty soul must drink up destiny,
Were it a poisoned cup!

[*Puts back the letter and lace into her breast.*

Farewell to life;
I *must* love some one, I must be beloved.
Had he but willed it, I'd have loved the King;
But he has left me with my thoughts alone!

The principal door opens. Enter an Usher *in court costume.*

Usher (*in a loud voice*). A letter from the King.

Queen (*as if awakened from a dream, with a loud cry of joy*). The King! Thank God! I'm saved!

End of Scene.

HUMOROUS SELECTIONS

CANDOUR

"I KNOW what you're going to say," she said,
And she stood up, looking uncommonly tall;
"You are going to speak of the hectic fall,
And say you're sorry the summer's dead,
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And I can imagine what made it so.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said;
"You're going to ask if I forget
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me"—here she dropped her head—
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day?
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said;
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme,
And"—her clear glance fell, and her cheek grew red—
"And have I noticed your tone was queer?
Why, everybody has seen it here!
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," I said;
"You are going to say you've been much annoyed,
And I'm short of tact—you will say devoid—
And I'm clumsy, and awkward, and call me Ted,
And I'll bear abuse like a dear old lamb,
And you'll have me, anyway, just as I am.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Ye—es," she said.

HER LOVERS

BY BACHELOR BEN

My first, my very first, his name was Will—
  A handsome fellow; fair, with curling hair,
And lovely eyes. I have his locket still.
  He went to Galveston and settled there,
At least I heard so. Ah, dear me—dear me!
How terribly in love he used to be!

The second, Robert Hill, he told his love
  The first night that we met. 'Twas at a ball—
A foolish boy. He carried off my glove.
  We sat out half the dances in the hall,
And flirted in the most outrageous way.
Ah, me! how mother scolded all next day.

The third woke up my heart. From night till morn
  From morn till night, I dreamed of him;
I treasured up a rosebud he had worn;
  My tears and kisses made his picture dim.
Strange that I cannot feel the old, old flame,
When I remember Paul—that was his name.

The fourth and fifth were brothers—twins at that;
  Good fellows, kind, devoted, clever, too.
'Twas rather shabby to refuse them flat—
  Both in one day, but what else could I do?
My heart was still with Paul, and he had gone
Yacht sailing with the Misses Garretson!

He never cared for me—I found that out—
  Despite the foolish clingings of my hope;
A few months proved it clear beyond a doubt.
  I steeled my heart; I would not pine or mope,
But masked myself in gaiety, and went
To grace his wedding when the cards were sent.

So those were all my loves. My husband? Oh,
  I met him down in Florida one fall—
Rich, middle-aged, and prosy, as you know;
  He asked me, I accepted; that is all.
A kind, good soul: he worships me; but then
I never count him in with other men.

HE TOLD ME SO*

An Up-to-Date Love Song

BY GEORGE GROSSMITH

I NE'ER my Donald shall see again—
  He told me so.
My Donald was a beauteous swain—
  He told me so.
And when he offered his love so pure,
He said he once had a wife demure;
He thought she lived—but he wasn't sure—
  He told me so.

He loved me with a bursting heart—
  He told me so.
And said from me he ne'er would part!
  He told me so.
But when I said—it ne'er could be—
He rushed with blinding tears from me
And drowned himself in the cruel sea—
  He told me so.

* These verses were originally written in an album for Princess Henry of Battenberg, and are printed here by Special Permission of the Author.

THE CULPRIT

BY MARGARET VANDERGRIFT

THE maiden aunt, in her straight-backed chair,
With a flush on her pale and wrinkled cheek,
And a horrified, mortified, mystified air,
Was just about to speak.

And the maiden niece—a nice little maid—
Stood meekly twirling her thumbs about,
With a half-triumphant, half-afraid,
And wholly bewitching pout:

Said the maiden aunt, "Will you please explain
What your heads were doing so close together?
You could easily, I assure you, Jane,
Have knocked me down with a feather.

"When I think of your bringing up—my care,
My scrupulous care—and it's come to this! You
Appeared to be sitting calmly there,
And letting a young man kiss you!

"Now tell me at once just what he said
And what you replied. This is quite a trial!
So don't stand there, and hang your head,
Or attempt the least denial.

"If I catch you once more in such a fix,
Though you are eighteen, I can tell you, Jane
I shall treat you just as if you were six,
And send you to school again.

"Are you going to tell me what he said?
Tell me at once! I'll not stand this trifling—
So look at me, Jane, hold up your head,
Don't go as if you were stifling."

Her voice was shaken—of course with fear:
"He said—he said, 'Will you have me, Jane?'
And I said I would. But, indeed, aunt dear,
We'll never do so again!"

FAMILY FINANCIERING

"THEY tell me you work for a dollar a day;
How is it you clothe your six boys on such pay?"
"I know you will think it conceited and queer,
But I do it because I'm a good financier.
"There's Pete, John, Jim, Joe, and William and Ned,
A half dozen boys to be all clothed and fed.
"And I buy for them all good, plain victuals to eat,
And clothing—I only buy clothing for Pete.
"When Pete's clothes are too small for him to go on;
My wife makes 'em over and gives 'em to John.
"When for John, who is ten, they have grown out of date,
She just makes 'em over for Jim, who is eight.
"When for Jim they become too ragged to fix,
She just makes 'em over for Joe, who is six.
"And when little Joseph can wear 'em no more,
She just makes 'em over for Bill, who is four.
"And when for young Bill they no longer will do,
She just makes 'em over for Ned, who is two.
"So you see, if I get enough clothing for Pete,
The family is furnished with clothing complete."
"But when Ned gets through with the clothing, and when
He has thrown it aside, what do you do with it then?"
"Why, once more we go around the circle complete,
And begin to use it for patches for Pete."

THE SEA

EVA L. OGDEN

SHE was rich and of high degree;
A poor and unknown artist he.
"Paint me," she said, "a view of the sea."
And he painted the sea as it looked the day
That Aphrodite arose from its spray;
And it broke, as she gazed on its face the while,
Into its countless—dimpled smile.
"What a poky, stupid picture!" said she:
"I don't believe he can paint the sea!"
Then he painted a raging, tossing sea,
Storming, with fierce and sudden shock,
A towering, mighty fastness—rock;
In its sides, above those leaping crests,
The thronging sea-birds built their nests.
"What a disagreeable daub!" said she:
"Why, it isn't anything like the sea!"
Then he painted a stretch of hot brown sand,
With a big hotel on either hand,
And a handsome pavilion for the band;—
Not a sign of water to be seen,
Except one faint little streak of green.
"What a perfectly exquisite picture!" said she:
"It's the very image of the sea!"

THE LADIES' WHIST CLUB

"Is it my lead?" asks the first,
"Well, of all hands, I've the worst."
"Dear me! If I only knew
What you had," chirps number two.

"Now I can't say, on the whole,
That this play accords with Pole;
But it is the best I have,"
Number three says, mild and sauve;
While above this small uproar
Comes the chorus from all four—
"What's the trump?"

"Miss Brown, is that your ace?—
Oh, say, have you seen the lace
Selling now at Brown & Dart's?
I forgot that she trumps hearts,—
And the most exquisite shade—
Gracious! haven't you a spade?
Is it my play? What was led?—
Do you know you can get thread,
Only four cents—John Smith's best?"—
Just here chime in all the rest—
"What's the trump?"

"This, I think, the leading spade;
Oh, I thought the Jack was played!"
"Well, that makes two points for you."
"One for us, did you say, Flo?"
"How can that be? Did you trump?—
Have you heard about the bump
Lizzie's boy had on his head?"—
Isn't that a lovely spread?—
Did I take that trick? Dear me!"
Here strike in the other three—
"What's the trump?"

"How much better we all play
Than we did! Well, I should say!

Once I couldn't keep my mind
On the game, but now I find
It is as easy as can be.
Is it your deal? Let me see—
No; the cards belong to me,
I remember now that Flo
Led the king, and that the nine—
Did you say the lead was mine?"
"What's the trump?"

AT A WOMEN'S CLUB

BY LAWRENCE K. RUSSELL

'Twas a waiting club for women. She
A maiden young, unparliamentary,
Of recent acquisition, and her eyes
Grew round with wonder as the women made
And carried various motions, by the aid
Of Cushing, or as Robert's Rules advise.

She could not understand the reason for
Their often saying some one "had the floor;"
Or why they talked so much of eyes and nose,
Of constitutions, by-laws, rules—and then,
They called one woman Mrs. Chairman, when
Her name was Jones, as everybody knows.

With parliament'ry skill they talked of art;
Of science, letters, of a woman's part,
In the great struggle for existence. Next,
They lightly touched on archæology;
Discussed with spirit foreign policy,
And finally made "Style and Dress" their text.

'Twas done in irony, for they were far
Above such mundane things, as women are
  When clubbed sufficiently. But it was now
The maiden rallied, for she knew full well
The latest cut of sleeves or skirt, could tell
  The shops for bargains, where to buy, and how:

She gave advice and counsel, told them where
To go for gowns and bonnets—what to wear—
  And they in frozen silence listened; glared
At her dumbfounded for the nonce, while she
Continued talking, all unconsciously,
  Nor wondered why the others sat and stared.

At last she paused—she had no more to tell—
The charm was broken, down the gavel fell.
  "You're out of order, madam!" roared the chair.
The maiden seemed bewildered, shook her skirt,
Examined her neat gloves, then, looking hurt,
  She hesitated, blushed, and stammered "Where?"

HOW DID SHE KNOW?

He had not said that he would come,
  He wrote no single line,
And yet she knew
  Without a word, or look, or sign.
The gentle breezes told her heart
  Although they seemed so dumb:
So she put on her sweetest dress—
  And then—he didn't come!

AN INTERNATIONAL EPISODE

BY ELIZA C. HALL

"YES, I liked you at first, I must confess,
And a week ago I might have been won,
But that is all over," she pensively sighed,
For I find you are only a younger son."

There was silence awhile on that Alpine height.
They could hear the sound of a mountain stream;
He twirled his moustache and his alpenstock,
While she softly warbled, "It was a dream."

"We leave to-morrow for France," she resumed,
"I hope I shall meet you at Paris next spring.
But *don't* say I've flirted, for culture, you know
Is hardly consistent with that sort of thing."

"If it's not a flirtation, what, under heaven,
Would your ladyship call it?" he fiercely said
And the question, I own, is one that well
Might bother the average British head.

She turned her face to the rosy west
Where the flush of dying day still glowed;
"'Tis nothing," she pouted, reflectively,
"But an 'international episode.'"

REVERIE IN CHURCH

BY GEO. A. BAKER, JUNR.

The effect of this soliloquy will depend greatly upon the facial expression.

Too early, of course! How provoking!
I told Ma just how it would be.

I might as well have on a wrapper,
  For there's not a soul here yet to see.
There! Sue Delaplaine's pew is empty,—
  I declare if it isn't too bad!
I know my suit cost more than hers did,
  And I wanted to see her look mad.
I do think that sexton's too stupid—
  He's put some one else in our pew—
And the girl's dress just kills mine completely;
  Now what am I going to do?
The psalter, and Sue isn't here yet!
  I don't care, I think it's a sin
For people to get late to service,
  Just to make a great show coming in.
Perhaps she is sick, and can't get here—
  She said she'd a headache last night.
How mad she'll be after her fussing!
  I declare it would serve her just right.
Oh, you've got here at last, my dear, have you?
  Well, I don't think you need be so proud
Of that bonnet if Virot did make it,
  It's horrid fast-looking, and loud.
What a dress!—for a girl in her senses
  To go on the street in light blue!—
And those coat-sleeves—they wore them last summer—
  Don't doubt, though, that she thinks they're new.
Mrs. Gray's polonaise was imported—
  So dreadful!—a minister's wife,
And thinking so much about fashion!—
  A pretty example of life!

The altar's dressed sweetly—I wonder
  Who sent those white flowers for the font!—
Some girl who's gone on the assistant—
  Don't doubt it was Bessie Lamont.
Just look at her now, little humbug!—
  So devout—I suppose she don't know
That she's bending her head too far over
  And the end of her switches all show.
What a sight Mrs. Ward is this morning!
  That woman will kill me some day,
With her horrible lilacs and crimsons,
  Why will these old things dress so gay.
And there's Jenny Welles with Fred Tracy—
  She's engaged to him now—horrid thing!
Dear me! I'd keep on my glove sometimes,
  If I did have a solitaire ring!
How *can* this girl next to me act so—
  The way that she turns round and stares,
And then makes remarks about people;
  She'd better be saying her prayers.
Oh, dear, what a dreadful long sermon!
  He must love to hear himself talk!
And it's after twelve now,—how provoking!
  I wanted to have a nice walk.
Through at last. Well it isn't so dreadful
  After all, for we don't dine till one;
How can people say church is poky!—
  So wicked!—I think it's real fun.

FEMALE GOSSIP

"I HEARD it!"
"Who told you?"
"Her friend."
"You don't say!"
"'Tis dreadful!"
"Yes, awful!"
"Don't tell it, I pray!"

"Good gracious!"
"Who'd think it!"
"Well! well! well!"
"Dear me!"
"I've had *my* suspicion!"
"And I, too, you see!"

"Lord, help us!"
"Poor creature!"
"So artful!"
"So sly!"
"No beauty!"
"Quite thirty!"
"Between you and I!"

"I'm going!"
"Don't! Stay, love!"
"I can't!"
"I'm forlorn!"
"Farewell, dear!"
"Good-by, sweet!"
"*I'm glad she is gone!*"

ZEKLE

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

ZEKLE crep' up, quite unbeknown,
An' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

Agin' the chimbly crooknecks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The wannut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle fires danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

The very room, coz she wuz in,
  Looked warm frum floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez th' apples she wuz peelin'.

She heerd a foot, an' knowed it, tu,
  A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
  Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
  Some doubtfle o' the seekle;
His heart kep' goin' pitypat,
  But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk,
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work
  Ez ef a wager spurred her.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
  "Wal, no; I come designin'—"
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrow's i'nin'."

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
  Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
  He couldn't ha' told ye, nuther.

Sez he, "I'd better call again;"
  Sez she, "Think likely, *Mister;*"
The last word pricked him like a pin,
  An'—wal, he up and kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,

All kind o' smily round the lips
  An' teary round the lashes.

Her blood riz quick, though, like the tide
  Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is, they wuz cried
  In meetin', come nex' Sunday.

A STORY OF CHINESE LOVE

THE festive Ah Goo
  And Too Hay, the fair—
They met, and the two
  Concluded to pair.

They "spooned" in the way.
  That most lovers do,
And Ah Goo kissed Too Hay,
  And Too Hay kissed Ah Goo.

Said the festive Ah Goo,
  As his heart swelled with pride,
"Me heap likee you—
  You heap be my blide."

And she, looking down,
  All so modest and pretty,
'Twixt a smile and a frown,
  Gently murmured, "You betee."

EGO ET ECHO

BY JOHN G. SAXE

I ASKED of Echo, 'tother day
(Whose words are few and often funny),

What to a novice she could say
  Of courtship, love, and matrimony?
  Quoth Echo, plainly: "Matter-o'-money!"

Whom should I marry? Should it be
  A dashing damsel, gay and pert,—
A pattern of inconstancy;
  Or selfish, mercenary flirt?
  Quoth Echo, sharply: "Nary flirt!"

What if aweary of the strife
  That long has lured the dear deceiver,
She promised to amend her life,
  And sin no more, can I believe her?
  Quoth Echo, very promptly: "Leave her!"

But if some maiden with a heart,
  On me should venture to bestow it,
Pray, should I act the wiser part
  To take the treasure, or forego it?
  Quoth Echo, with decision: "Go it!"

Suppose a billet-doux (in rhyme),
  As warm as if Catullus penned it,
Declare her beauty so sublime
  That Cytherea's can't transcend it,
  Quoth Echo, very clearly: "Send it!"

But what if, seemingly afraid
  To bind her fate in Hymen's fetter,
She vow she means to die a maid,—
  In answer to my loving letter?
  Quoth Echo, rather coolly: "Let her!"

What if, in spite of her disdain,
  I find my heart entwined about

With Cupid's dear, delicious chain,
So closely that I can't get out?
Quoth Echo, laughingly: "Get out!"

But if some maid with beauty blest,
As pure and fair as heaven can make her,
Will share my labour and my rest,
Till envious death shall overtake her?
Quoth Echo (sotto voce): "Take her!"

A TRAGEDY ON PAST PARTICIPLES

BY C. A. S.

Showing how easily the English language may be simplified by eliminating verbal irregularities.

SALLY SALTRE she was a teacher and taught,
And her friend, Charley Church, was a preacher who praught,
Though his friends all called him a screecher who scraught.

His heart, when he saw her, kept sinking and sunk,
And his eye, meeting hers, kept winking and wunk;
While she, in turn, fell to thinking and thunk;

And hastened to woo her, and sweetly he would,
For his love grew until to a mountain it grewed,
And what he was longing to do, then he dooed.

In secret he wanted to speak, and he spoke,
To seek with his lips what his heart long had soke;
So he managed to let the truth leak and it loke.

He asked her to ride to church and they rode;
They so sweetly did glide that they both thought they glode,
And they came to the place to be tied and were toed.

And homeward, he said, let us drive, and they drove;
And soon as they wished to arrive they arrove,
For whatever he couldn't contrive she controve.

The kiss he was dying to steal then he stole;
At her feet where he wanted to kneel there he knole,
And he said: "I feel better than ever I fole."

So they to each other kept clinging and clung,
While time on his swift circuit was winging and wung,
And this was the thing he was bringing and brung.

The man Sally wanted to catch and had caught—
That she wanted from others to snatch and had snaught—
Was the one she now liked to scratch and had scraught.

And Charley's warm love began freezing and froze,
While he took to teasing and cruelly tose
The girl he had wished to be squeezing and squoze.

"Wretch!" he cried, when she threatened to leave him and left,
"How could you deceive me as you have deceft?"
And she answered: "I promised to cleave and I've cleft!"

LOVE AND LATIN

She just had left the Latin school,
Her mind with richest learning stored,
And she was grandly beautiful—
A maiden made to be adored.

I loved her and I told her so,
But added this, "Whatever hap,
Let not your friends at present know,"
She whispered softly, "verbum sap."

"I have no wealth to give to thee
At present, sweet; is love enough?"
She bent her loving gaze on me
And, smiling, answered, "quantum suff."

We've wed; she's mine while life endures,
And oft I say with love aglow,
"You stole my heart, and I won yours,"
To which she answers, "quid pro quo."

HE WORRIED ABOUT IT

BY S. V. FOSS

"THE sun's heat will give out in ten million years more,
It will sure give out then, if it doesn't before,"
And he worried about it;
It would surely give out, so the scientists said,
In all scientifical books that he read,
And the whole mighty universe then would be dead.
And he worried about it.

"And some day the earth will fall into the sun,
Just as sure and as straight as if shot from a gun,"
And he worried about it;
"When strong gravitation unbuckles her straps,
Just picture," he said, "what a fearful collapse!
It will come in a few million ages, perhaps."
And he worried about it.

"The earth will become much too small for the race,
When we pay thirty dollars an inch for pure space."
And he worried about it;
"The earth will be crowded so much, without doubt,
That there'll be no room for one's tongue to stick out,
And no room for one's thoughts to wander about."
And he worried about it.

"The Gulf Stream will curve and New England grow
torrider
Than was ever the climate of southernmost Florida,"
And he worried about it;
"The ice crop will be knocked into small smithereens,
And crocodiles block up our mowing-machines,
And we'll lose our fine crops of potatoes and beans."
And he worried about it.

"And in less than ten thousand years, there's no doubt
Our supply of lumber and coal will give out."
And he worried about it;
"Just then the Ice Age will return cold and raw,
Frozen men will stand stiff with arms outstretched in
awe,
As if vainly beseeching a general thaw."
And he worried about it.

His wife took in washing (a dollar a day),
His daughter sewed shirts, the rude grocer to pay,
He didn't worry about it;
While his wife beat her tireless rub-a-dub-dub
On the washboard drum in her old wooden tub,
He sat by the stove and he just let her rub,
He didn't worry about it.

JOSIAR

I NEVER kin forgit the day
That we went out a-walkin';
And sot down on the river bank,
And kept on hours a-talkin';
He twisted up my apron-string,
An' folded it together,

An' said he thought for harvest-time
  'Twas cur'us kind o' weather.

The sun went down as we sot there—
  Josiar seemed uneasy,
An' mother, she began to call:
  "Loweezy! Come, Loweezy!"
An' then Josiar spoke right up,
  As I wos just a-startin',
An' said, "Loweezy, what's the use
  Of us two ever partin'?"

It kind o' took me by surprise,
  An' yet I knew 'twas comin'—
I'd heard it all the summer long
  In every wild bee's hummin';
I meant to hide my love from him,
  But seems as if he knew it;
I'd studied out the way I'd act,
  But la! I couldn't do it.

It darker grew as we sot there,
  But Josiar seemed quite easy,
And mother had to call again,
  "Loweezy! Come, Loweezy!"

A NOVEL POEM

"JANE EYRE," "Beneath the Greenwood Tree,"
  And robed "In Silk Attire,"
Stood waiting for "Our Mutual Friend,"
  And wished that he was nigh her,
For she in need of "Hard Cash" was,
  And "Hard Times" did she dread;
He plays a game of "Hide and Seek,"
  "He cometh Not, She Said."

"The Wandering Heir" at last appeared,
"A Celebrated Case,"
He'd gambled "To the Bitter End,"
"Put Yourself in His Place."
"Good-Bye, Sweetheart," I must away,
I've wrecked "A Noble Life."
"Never Too Late to Mend," she cried,
We'll yet be "Man and Wife."

"Oh, Love Me Little, Love Me Long,"
"Not Wisely, but Too Well."
"The Romance of a Poor Young Man"
He quick to her did tell,
And how he did "A Dark Night's Work"
To gain a lofty station.
"A Noble Woman" should forgive
"A Terrible Temptation."

"Twenty Years After" the above,
"A Treasure Trove" he struck;
The "Golden Butterfly" was his—
Folks said 'twas "Rare Good Luck."
"Great Expectations" came at last
To realize his wishes.
He covered then his "Queen of Hearts,"
With "Bread and Cheese and Kisses."

Up in "The Village on the Cliff,"
Stands a "Bleak House" alone;
"Her Lord and Master" now he is,
And this place is their home.
For "Her Face was Her Fortune," yes,
And nearly he "Twice Lost" her;
He has been almost "Three Times Dead"
To find out "What He Cost Her."

THE BABY OF THE FUTURE

Nurse.

How doth the little busy bee
  Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
  From every opening flower!

Baby [*boldly*].

How does the little bee do this?
  Why, by an impulse blind,
Cease, then, to praise good works of such
  An automatic kind.

Nurse:

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
  For Heaven hath made them so;
Let bears and lions growl and fight,
  For 'tis their nature to.

Baby [*ironically*].

Indeed? A brutal nature, then,
  Excuses brutal ways.
Unthinking girl! you little know
  The problems that you raise.

Nurse [*continuing*].

But, children, you should never let
  Your angry passions rise;
Your little hands were never made
  To tear each other's eyes.

Baby [*contemptuously*].

Not "made" to tear? Well, what of that?
  No more, at first, were claws.

All comes by adaptation,
  No need of final cause.
And if we use the hands to tear,
  Just as the nose to smell,
Ere many ages have gone by
  They'll do it very well.

Nurse.

Tom, Tom, the Piper's son
Stole a pig, and away he run!

Baby [*reproachfully*].

Come, come! Away he "run"!
Grammar condemns what you've just "done"
Should we not read "The piper's man
Stole a pig, and away he 'ran'?"

Nurse.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star!
How I wonder what you are!

Baby [*pityingly*].

Do you really wonder, Jane?
And to me all seems so plain!
Go downstairs, my girl, and find
Books wherewith t' improve your mind,
And if heavenly bodies then
Still remain beyond your ken,
You had better go and ax
Good Professor Parallax.

Nurse.

Bye, baby-bunting,
Father's gone a-hunting,
All to get a rabbit's skin
To wrap the baby-bunting in.

Baby [*sternly*].

The cruel sport of hunting
To moral sense is stunting;
And since papa's objection
To useful vivisection
Convicts him, as it seems to me,
Of signal inconsistency,
I must, with thanks, decline the skin
For wrapping baby-bunting in.
[*Puts Nurse to bed. Scene closes.*]

HE UNDERSTOOD

BY ANNE VIRGINIA CULBERTSON

ROBIN rashly kissed my hand.
Thereupon I gave command,
"Leave me, sir, or else refrain
Doing this bold deed again.
Once for all, pray understand,
You do wrong to kiss my hand."

Robin heeded my command—
Stayed, nor kissed again my hand.
Yet he doth not mope or sigh;
What can be the reason why?
This I told him: "Understand,
You do wrong to kiss—my hand."

THE SOCIETY PLAY

ACT I. Scene—Long Branch in June.
The beach—soft music—crescent moon—
A hero—English nobleman—a heroine—American.

Flirtation—kindred spirits—bliss—
Eyes meet—impassioned words—a kiss—
"Be mine!"—"I will!" and all is done,
The curtain falls upon Act I.

Act II. Scene—New York—in Fall,
A doubt—"Is he a Lord at all?"
Kind friends to gossiping inclined,
Stern parents of inquiring mind.
Suspicion—accusation—rage—
Heroics—tears—paces stage—
"I go, but I'll return to you."
The curtain falls upon Act II.

Act III. A lapse of several years—
And English hero disappears—
Despairing damsel—grief untold—
Admirer, bald—and bent and old—
A declaration—tears unpent—
Persuasion—ultimate consent—
They wed—a note from o'er the sea—
A swoon—the curtain falls upon Act III.

Act IV. Another lapse of years—
A widow—blonde—in cap and cape,
More tears—uncertainty and doubt—
A start—a step—a voice without—
"'Tis he!" (*Applause.*)
Which all expect—
Hair tinged with grey—
(*Done for effect.*)
Embrace—reunion—both adore—
And curtain falls upon Act IV.

NOTHING SUITED HIM

He sat at the dinner table there,
With discontented frown.
The potatoes and steak were underdone
And the bread was baked too brown,
The pie too sour, the pudding too sweet;
And the mincemeat much too fat,
The soup was greasy, too, and salt—
"'Twas hardly fit for a cat.

"I wish you could taste the bread and pies
I have seen my mother make;
They were something like, and 'twould do you good,
Just to look at a slice of her cake."
Said the smiling wife: "I'll improve with age;
Just now, I'm but a beginner.
But your mother called to see me to-day
And I got her to cook the dinner."

THE INVENTOR'S WIFE

BY MRS. E. T. CORBETT

It's easy to talk of the patience of Job. Humph! Job he'd nothing to try him!
Ef *he'd* been married to 'Bijah Brown, folks wouldn't have dared come nigh him.
Trials, indeed! Now I'll tell you what—ef you want to be sick of your life,
Jest come and change places with me a spell—for I'm an inventor's wife.
And sech inventions! I'm never sure, when I take up my coffee-pot,

That 'Bijah hain't ben "improvin'" it, and it mayn't
go off like a shot.
Why, didn't he make me a cradle once, that would keep
itself a-rockin';
And didn't it pitch the baby out, and wasn't his head
bruised shockin'?
And there was his "Patent Peeler," too—a wonderful
thing, I'll say;
But it hed one fault,—it never stopped till the apple
was peeled away.
As for locks, and clocks, and mowin' machines, and
reapers, and all sech trash,
Why, 'Bijah's invented heaps of 'em, but they don't
bring in no *cash*.
Law! that don't worry him—not at all; he's the aggra-
vatin'est man—
He'll set in his little workshop there, and whistle, and
think, and plan, [powder-horn,
Inventin' a jew's harp to go by steam, or a new-fangled
While the children's goin' barefoot to school and the
weeds is chokin' our corn.
When 'Bijah and me kep' company, he warn't like this,
you know;
Our folks all thought he was dreadful smart—but that
was years ago.
He was handsome as any picture then, and he had such
a glib, bright way—
I never thought that a time would come, when I'd rue
my weddin' day;
But when I've been forced to chop the wood, and tend
to the farm beside,
And look at 'Bijah a-setting there, I've jest dropped
down and cried.

We lost the hull of our turnip crop while he was inventin' a gun;
But I counted it one of my marcies when it bu'st before 'twas done.
So he turned it into a "burglar alarm." It ought to give thieves a fright—
'Twould scare an honest man out of his wits, ef he sot it off at night.
Sometimes I wonder ef 'Bijah's crazy, he does sech cur'ous things.
Hev I told you about his bedstead yit?—'Twas full of wheels and springs;
It hed a key to wind it up, and a clock face at the head;
All you did was to turn them hands, and at any hour you said,
That bed got up and shook itself, and bounced you on the floor,
And then shet up, jest like a box, so you couldn't sleep any more.
Wa'al 'Bijah he fixed it all complete, and he sot it at half-past five,
But he hadn't more'n got into it when—dear me! sakes alive!
Them wheels began to whiz and whir! I heerd a fearful snap!
And there was that bedstead, with 'Bijah inside, shet up jest like a trap!
I screamed, of course, but twan't no use, then I worked that hull long night
A-tryin' to open the pesky thing. At last I got in a fright;
I couldn't hear his voice inside, and I thought he might be dyin';

So I took a crow-bar and smashed it in.—There was 'Bijah, peacefully lyin',
Inventin' a way to git out agin. That was all very well to say,
But I don't b'lieve he'd have found it out if I'd left him in all day.
Now, sence I've told you my story, do you wonder I'm tired of life?
Or think it strange I often wish I warn't an inventor's wife?

HUMPTY DUMPTY

BY MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall:
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall:
Not all the king's horses nor all the king's men
Could set Humpty Dumpty up again."

FULL many a project that never was hatched
Falls down, and gets shattered, beyond being patched;
And luckily, too! for if all came to chickens,
Then things without feathers might go to the dickens.

If each restless unit that moves among men
Might climb to a place with the privileged "ten,"
Pray tell us where all the commotion would stop!
Must the whole pan of milk, forsooth, rise to the top?

If always the statesman attained to his hopes,
And grasped the great helm, who would stand by the ropes?
Or if all dainty fingers their duties might choose,
Who would wash up the dishes, and polish the shoes?

Suppose every aspirant writing a book
Contrived to get published, by hook or by crook;
Geologists then of a later creation
Would be startled, I fancy, to find a formation
Proving how the poor world did most wofully sink
Beneath mountains of paper, and oceans of ink!

Or even suppose all the women were married;
By whom would superfluous babies be carried?
Where would be the good aunts that should knit all the stockings?
Or nurses, to do up the singings and rockings?
Wise spinsters, to lay down their wonderful rules,
And with theories rare to enlighten the fools,—
Or to look after orphans, and primary schools?

No! Failure's a part of the infinite plan;
Who finds that he can't, must give way to who can;
And as one and another drops out of the race,
Each stumbles at last to his suitable place.

So the great scheme works on,—though, like eggs from the wall,
Little single designs to such ruin may fall,
That not all the world's might, of its horses or men,
Could set their crushed hopes at the summit again.

IRISH COQUETRY

Says Patrick to Biddy, "Good mornin', me dear!
It's a bit av a sacret I've got for yer ear:
It's yoursel' that is lukin' so charmin' the day,
That the heart in me breast is fast slippin' away."
"'Tis you that kin flatther," Miss Biddy replies,
And throws him a glance from her merry blue eyes.

"Arrah, thin," cries Patrick, "'tis thinkin' av you
That's makin' me heart-sick, me darlint, that's thrue!
Sure I've waited a long while to tell ye this same,
And Biddy Maloney'll be sich a foine name."
Cries Biddy, "Have done wid yer talkin', I pray;
Shure me heart's not me own for this many a day!

"I gave it away to a good-lookin' boy,
Who thinks there is no one loike Biddy Malloy;
So don't bother me, Pat; jist be aisy," says she.
"Indade, if ye'll let me, I will that!" says he;
"It's a bit of a flirt that ye are on the sly;
I'll not trouble ye more, but I'll bid ye good-by."

"Arrah, Patrick," cries Biddy, "an' where are ye goin'?
Sure it isn't the best of good manners ye're showin'
To lave me so suddint!" "Och, Biddy," says Pat!
"You have knocked the cock-feathers jist out av me hat!"
"Come back, Pat!" says she. "What fur, thin?" says he.
"Bekase I meant you all the time, sir!" says she.

AT THE GARDEN GATE

THEY lingered at the garden gate,
The moon was full above;
He took her darling hand in his,
The trembling little dove,
And pressed it to his fervent lips,
And softly told his love.

About her waist he placed his arm,
He called her all his own;

His heart, he said, it ever beat
  For her, and her alone;
And he was happier than a king
  Upon a golden throne.

"Come weal, come woe," in ardent tones
  This youth continued he,
"As is the needle to the pole,
  So I will constant be;
No power on earth shall tear thee, love,
  Away, I swear, from me!"

From out the casement window popped
  A grizzly night-capped head;
A hoarse voice yelled: "You, Susan Jane,
  Come in and go to bed!"
And that was all,—it was enough:
  The young man wildly fled.

AN INTERRUPTED PROPOSAL

BY ROBERT C. V. MEYERS

He sat in the parlour with Ray,
He had come to propose, they say,
So the others kept out of the way.
But he felt rather queer
Sitting here,
Ray knitting a fluffy nonsense
She called a cloud,
And it was, in one sense,
For it dulled his brightness,
For all its lightness,
And he could only talk aloud,
Instead of in tender

Whispers that make
A maiden surrender
For sympathy's sake.
He thought he'd go mad
As he looked at that cloud. It had
Line after line of little gray shells,
Each one endowed with hundreds of stitches
In little half-hitches,
Like an alphabet mixed till it nothing spells.

"The weather's fine,"
He said. "Yes," snapped she.
Then she made a line
Of shells carefully.
She looked so comely, there in the light
Of the lamp that burned low as though it knew
What was expected of it to do
To-night.
She looked so lovely he felt his heart
Give such a start
He had to hold it with all his might
To keep it from jumping away outright.

"Oh, Ray," he said—
She raised her head.
"Richard." said she, "I think thee's not well."
Then every gray shell
Shook as the needles turned 'em round.
"Oh, Rachel," he said—and she looked at him
Till his head began to swim.
But sudden he started and said with a vim
Quite new to him,
"There is a mouse—"
"Oh!" shrieked Rachel. Down went the cloud

Down went the needles clattering loud,
And through the house
Her voice rang, and
Up on a chair
That was nearest at hand
She jumped, and the air
Was filled with her cries,
While her skirts she caught
In one hand and fought
With the other the tribe of little mice
Her fancy seemingly had brought
Before her startled fearsome eyes.

Richard he took
A step and mistook,
In his affright,
The little table
That held the light,—
Caught it, and it
Was not able
To bear his weight and suddenly split.
Down went the lamp on the floor,
The light went out and 'twas dark as of yore
When the candle went out for Moses. And Ray
Cried, "Keep it away!"
And Richard cried, "Ray,
Listen to me. I merely said
There is a mouse—"
"Oh," shrieked she, "I'll rouse
The very dead
If thee don't kill it." "I merely said,"
Cried he—"Oh," shrieked she,
"Here in the dark they'll tickle worse.

Hold me, Richard, hold me," said she,
"The chair is wobbling, it's like a horse,
And my foot is going through the cane—
Oh, oh, oh!"

Richard ran
Like a man,
And held her, you know,
For it was plain
She needed support.

And then the report
Has it he told her he loved her dear,
And that the little mouse wasn't here,
But what he meant to say, only she
Interrupted so frightenedly,
Was that there was a mouse at home
That nibbled at the honey-comb.
Her "oh's" were stopped.
Her voice it dropped.
"Dick," said she, "you men are so
Prone to go
Wrong when you had better go right.
Pick up the lamp, and make a light."
I'm rather sorry the table split,
For mother set great store by it.
But pick up the lamp and make a light."
"But," said he, "Ray, did thee think the mouse
Was in this house?"
"I think," said she, "a little mouse
Grows big as an elephant when there's cause.
And the way of the wind can be told by straws—
It is only a man that see-saws,
And a woman's wit can sometimes hit

An expedient even if 'tis a mouse
That sojourns in another house.

Let the little mouse stay in thy home
And have its fill of honey-comb.
Now make a light, and give me my cloud,
I'm sure I've dropped some stitches and—
Don't squeeze my hand!
Oh, Dick, thee shouldn't kiss so loud."

A COOK OF THE PERIOD

THE looks of yer, ma'am, rather suits me—
The wages ye offer 'ill do;
But thin I can't inter yer sarvice
Without a condition or two.
And now, to begin, is the kitchen
Commodgeous, with plenty of light,
And fit, ye know, fur intertainin'
Sech fri'nds as I'm like to invite?

And nixt, are yous reg'lar at male-times?
Becase, 'taint convainyent, ye see,
To wait, and if I behaves punkshul,
It's no more than yous ought to be.
And thin is your gurrels good-natured?
The rayson I lift my last place,
The Friench nuss was sich a high lady,
I sint a dish-cloth at her face.

And have yer the laste of objiction
To min droppin' in whin they choose?
I'v got some enlivinin' fust cousins
That frayquintly brings me the news.

I must have thim trayted powlitely;
  I give yer fair warnin', ma'am, now,
If the airy gate be closed agin thim,
  You'll find me commincin' a row.

These matthers agrayed on between us,
  I'd try yer a wake, so I wud.
(She looks like the kind I can manage,
  A thin thing without any blud!)
But mind, if I comes for a wake, ma'am,
  I comes for that time, and no liss;
And so, thin, purvidin' ye'd want me,
  Jusht give me yer name and addriss.

THE BACHELOR SALE

I DREAMED a dream in the midst of my slumbers,
And as fast as I dreamed it was coined into numbers;

It seemed that a law had been recently made,
That a tax on old bachelors' pates should be laid;
And, in order to make them all willing to marry,
The tax was as large as a man could well carry.

The bachelors grumbled, and said 'twas no use,
'Twas cruel injustice and horrid abuse—
And declared that to save their own hearts' blood from
  spilling,
Of such a vile tax they would ne'er pay a shilling.

But the rulers determined their scheme to pursue,
So they set all the bachelors up at vendue.

A crier was sent through the town to and fro,
To rattle his bell and his trumpet to blow,
And to bawl out to all he might meet on his way,
"Ho!" forty old bachelors sold here to-day."

And presently all the old maids of the town,—
Each one in her very best bonnet and gown,—
From thirty to sixty, fair, plain, red, and pale,
Of every description all flocked to the sale.

The auctioneer, then, with his hammer began;
And called out aloud, as he held up a man,
"How much for a bachelor? Who wants to buy?"
In a twink, every maiden responded, "I—I!"

In short, at a hugely extravagant price,
The bachelors all were sold off in a trice,
And forty old maidens—some younger, some older—
Each lugged an old bachelor home on her shoulder.

ALEXANDER

BY ALEXANDER GEDDES

THERE was a youth who kept a store
And though some might be grander,
He kept a store all through the war.
And his name was Alexander.

He mixed his goods with a cunning hand,
And was a skilful brander;
While oft his sugar half was sand—
Some called him Alex-sander.

One day his loved one to him came,
  Then lovingly he scanned her;
He asked her would she change her name,
  And a ring did Alex-hand-her.

"Oh, yes," she said with smiling lip,
  "If I can be commander;"
They both then formed a partnership
  And called it Alex-and-Her.

ON THE STAIR

BY C. F. LESTER

They were in the shadowy gray
    On the stair—
They were all alone, but they
    Didn't care.
"Now dare you, sir," said she,
"Eat a philopene with me,"
"If you'd make the stake a kiss," he replied, "I would dare."
And they ate one, then and there,
    On the stair.

Now the gas was burning low,
    On the stair.
Thought the rascal: "There is no
    Time to spare!"

Not a soul was to be seen.
So he murmured, "Philopene!"
And he won it, and he lost it, and he paid it, full and fair,
(I know, for I was there!)
On the stair.

FROM HAND TO MOUTH

"FROM hand to mouth," he gaily said,
And pressed her dainty finger tips,
Which salutation quickly led
To one upon her perfect lips,
As fair as roses in the South,
"From hand to mouth."

So she was won, and so was he.
'Twas something like a year ago,
And now they both are one, you see,
Although which one I hardly know.
They're living somewhere in the South
From hand to mouth.

THE LECTURE

BY E. T. CORBETT

She spoke of the Rights of Woman,
  In words that glowed and burned;
She spoke of the worm down-trodden
  And said that the worm had turned!
She proved by columns of figures
  That whatever a man essayed,
A woman could do far better—
  In politics, art, or trade.

She painted in fervid colours
  The bright millennial day
When man should bow submissive
  'Neath woman's wiser sway.
She said—but her words were frozen—
  Her eyes were wide with fear—
She mounted the chair, the table—
  Then faintly gasped: "He's here!"

Curiosity—excitement—
  Dread—overwhelmed the house!
We were rising for her rescue
  When—we saw a tiny mouse.

He scurried over the platform,
  And swiftly the monster ran,
Yet he was killed in a moment
  By that Paltry Thing, a man!

Then what sympathetic murmurs
  Rose quivering on the air!
And smelling-salts were proffered
  To the heroine in the chair.
Lastly, one resolution
  Was read, and passed in a trice;
"Resolved—though Men are so useless,
  They're needed for killing mice."

PSALM OF MARRIAGE

BY PHŒBE CARY

Tell me not in idle jingle,
  "Marriage is an empty dream!"
For the girl is dead that's single,
  And girls are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
  Single blessedness a fib!
"Man thou art, to man returnest!"
  Has been spoken of the rib.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
  Is our destined end or way;
But to act that each to-morrow
  Finds us nearer marriage day.

Life is long, and youth is fleeting,
  And our hearts, though light and gay,
Still like pleasant drums are beating
  Wedding marches all the way.

In the world's broad field of battle,
  In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
  Be a heroine,—a wife!

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant,
  Let the dead past bury its dead!
Act—act in the living present!
  Heart within and hope ahead!

Lives of married folks remind us
  We can live our lives as well,
And, departing, leave behind us
  Such examples as shall "tell."

Such example that another,
  Wasting time in idle sport,
A forlorn, unmarried brother,
  Seeing, shall take heart and court.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
  With a heart on triumph set;
Still contriving, still pursuing,
  And each one a husband get.

THE DEAD DOLL

BY MARGARET VANDEGRIFT

You needn't be trying to comfort me—I tell you my dolly is dead!
There's no use in saying she isn't with a crack like that in her head;
It's just like you said it wouldn't hurt much to have my tooth out, that day,
And then, when the man 'most pulled my head off, you hadn't a word to say.
And I guess you must think I'm a baby, when you say you can mend it with glue,
As if I didn't know better than that! Why, just suppose it was you?
You might make her look all mended—but what do I care for looks?
Why glue's for chairs and tables, and toys, and the backs of books!
My dolly! my own little daughter! Oh, but it's the awfullest crack!
It just makes me sick to think of the sound when her poor head went whack
Against that horrible brass thing that holds up the little shelf,
Now, Nursey, what makes you remind me? I know that I did it myself?
I think you must be crazy—you'll get her another head!
What good would forty heads do her? I tell you my dolly is dead!
And to think I hadn't quite finished her elegant new Spring hat!
And I took a sweet ribbon of her's last night to tie on that horrid cat!

When my mamma gave me that ribbon—I was playing out in the yard—
She said to me, most expressly, "Here's a ribbon for Hildegarde."
And I went and put it on Tabby, and Hildegarde saw me do it;
But I said to myself, "Oh, never mind, I don't believe she knew it!"
But I know that she knew it now, and I just believe, I do,
That her poor little heart was broken, and so her head broke too.
Oh, my baby! my little baby! I wish my head had been hit!
For I've hit it over and over, and it hasn't cracked a bit.
But since the darling is dead, she'll want to be buried of course;
We will take my little wagon, Nurse, and you shall be the horse,
And I'll walk behind and cry; and we'll put her in this, you see—
This dear little box—and we'll bury her there out under the maple tree.
And papa will make me a tombstone, like the one he made for my bird;
And he'll put what I tell him on it—yes, every single word!
I shall say, "Here lies Hildegarde, a beautiful doll who is dead;
She died of a broken heart, and a dreadful crack in her head."

AT THE ORATORIO

'Twas at the oratorio
In Music Hall a year ago
  (I think 'twas the "Creation"),
Two ladies sat in front of me,
Who carried on incessantly
  A whispered conversation.

Though chorus, solos, all were fine,
And Gerster's arias divine,
  They never seemed to hear them;
But, breathless, chattered on—I trust
Unconscious of the deep disgust
  Of all the people near them.

At length a movement soft and slow
Changed to a loud *prestissimo*,
  The mighty organ shivered—
With one tremendous choral sweep
The music burst; then into deep,
  Intensest silence quivered.

And in that hush, profound and still,
A woman's voice high-pitched and shrill,
  Was plainly heard to utter,
In tones adjusted to the roar
Of music that had gone before,
  "Why! we fry ours in butter!"

THE WIFE'S APPEAL

BY GRACE GREENWOOD

I'm thinking, Charles, 'tis just a year,
  Or will be very soon,
Since you first told me of your love,
  One glorious day in June.

The birds caught up our notes of love
  In a song not half so sweet,
And earth's green carpet, violet flowered,
  It scarcely felt our feet.

But, *apropos* of carpets, Charles,
  I looked at some to-day,
Which you will purchase, won't you, dear,
  Before our next *soirée?*

And then, remember you, how, lost
  In love's delicious dream,
We long stood silently beside
  A gentle, gliding stream?

'Twas Nature's mirror; when your gaze
  No longer I could bear,
I modestly cast down my eyes,
  Yet but to meet it *there.*

And, *apropos* of mirrors, love,
  The dear gift of your mother
Is quite old-fashioned, and to-day
  I ordered home another.

Ah, well do I remember, Charles,
  When first your arm stole round me;
You little dreamed how long your *soul*
  In golden chains had bound me;

But *apropos* of chains, my own,
  At Banks's store last week,
I found the sweetest one, so rich,
  So tasteful, and unique!

The workmanship is most superb,
  The gold most fine and pure;
I quite long, Charles, to see that chain
  Suspend your miniature!

I heard sad news when you were out,—
  My nerves are much affected;—
You know that navy officer
  I once for you rejected?

Driven to despair by your success
  Made desperate by my scorn,
He went to sea, and has been lost
  In passing round Cape Horn.

Ah, *apropos* of capes, my love,
  I saw one in Broadway,
Of lace, as fine as though 'twas wove
  Of moonbeams, by a fay.

You'll purchase the exquisite thing,
  'Twill suit your taste completely;
Above the heart that loves you, Charles,
  'Twill rise and fall so sweetly.

LITTLE TURNCOATS

BY GEORGIA A. PECK

As passed the rector of All Saints one day,
Obsequiously an old man crossed his way,
And with "Good mornin', sir!" his head laid bare
Then, steadying his basket with all care
He turned its cover back to show within
Three sleeping kittens, saying, with a grin,
"I have some fine Episcopal* kittens here
That you might like to buy,—they won't come dear."

"Look here, old man!" called out a passer-by,
"I see what you're about, with half an eye!

* Names can be changed by the reciter to suit the occasion.

You tried to sell that lot to me last night
As good clean, Baptist kittens."
"You are right,
My friend, and they were Baptist then, all three,
But 'twas before their eyes were opened! See?"

THE BALLAD OF THE EMEU

BY BRET HARTE

Oh, say, have you seen at the Willows so green,—
So charming and rurally true,—
A singular bird, with a manner absurd
Which they call the Australian Emeu?
Have you
Ever seen this Australian Emeu?

It trots all around with its head on the ground,
Or erects it quite out of your view;
And the ladies all cry, when its figure they spy,
Oh, what a sweet pretty Emeu!
Oh! do
Just look at that lovely Emeu!

One day to this spot, when the weather was hot,
Came Matilda Hortense Fortescue;
And beside her there came a youth of high name,—
Augustus Florell Montague:
The two
Both loved that wild, foreign Emeu.

With two loaves of bread then they fed it, instead
Of the flesh of the white cockatoo,
Which once was its food in that wild neighbourhood
Where ranges the sweet Kangaroo:
That, too,
Is the game for the famous Emeu!

Old saws and gimlets but its appetite whets,
Like the world-famous bark of Peru:
There's nothing so hard that the bird will discard
And nothing its taste will eschew.
That you
Can give that long-legged Emeu!

The time slipped away in this innocent play,
When up jumped the bold Montague:
"Where's that specimen pin that I gaily did win
In raffle, and gave unto you,
Fortescue?"
No word spoke the guilty Emeu!

"Quick! tell me his name whom thou gavest that same,
Ere these hands in thy blood I imbrue!"
"Nay, dearest," she cried, as she clung to his side,
"I'm innocent as that Emeu!"
"Adieu!"
He replied, "Miss M. H. Fortescue!"

Down she dropped at his feet, all as white as a sheet,
As wildly he fled from her view:
He thought 'twas her sin; for he knew not the pin
Had been gobbled up by the Emeu:
All through
The voracity of that Emeu!

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